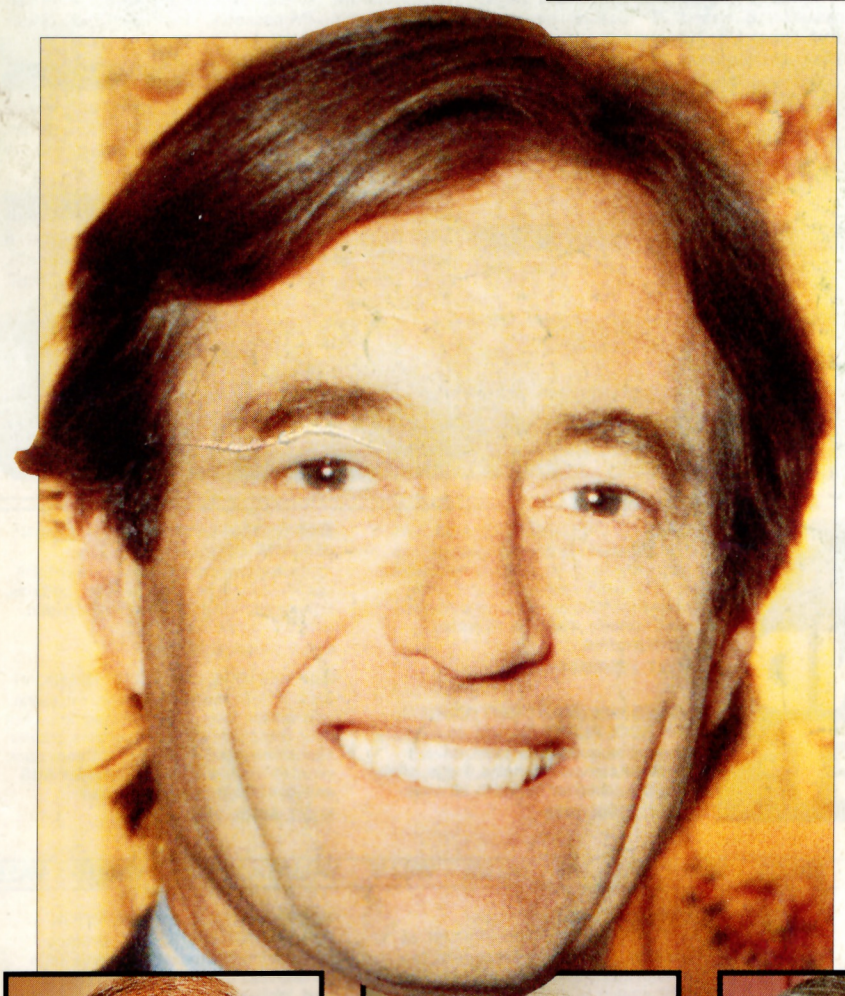
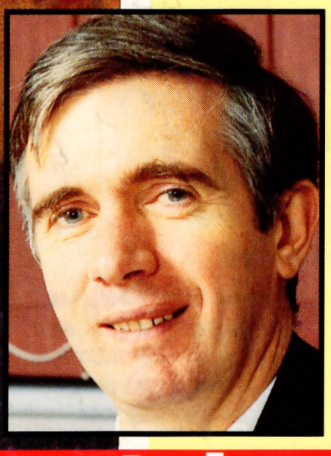
COACH MART

The weekly for the coach industry

Issue 666 £1 November 21st, 1991



PLAXTON CHAIRMAN MATTHEWS QUITS IN SHOCK GROUP SHAKE-UP



...and new team takes over

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AEC

1977 Plaxton Express, 53 seater, semi-auto gearbox, Bristol Dome, white/black exterior, autumn tint moquette. Stock No. 0006.

VOLVO

1983 B10M Jonckheere P599, 48 seats, 6 speed gearbox, curtains, toilet, drinnks machine, MoT 29.11.91. Stock No. R037.

1983 Volvo B10M 12 metre, 57 seater, Duple Laser, PA/radio/cassette, 6 speed ZF manual gearbox, MoT 15.07.92. Stock No. 1074.

1980 B58 Air/Leaf Dominant, 12 metre, 53 seats, 48 recliners, 5 fixed, automat g/b, power door, tinted windows, curtains, side lockers, new MoT. Stock No. 0012.

1973 B58 Plaxton Supreme, 11 metre, 53 (remoquetted) seats, X'Press doors, side lockers. Stock No. 1047.

BEDFORD

1975 YRQ Plaxton, 45 seats, power door, side lockers, private plates, Stock No. 1062.

LEYLAND

1982 Duple Dominant, 51 reclining seats, 6 spd gearbox, side lockers, MoT 21.01.92. Stock No. 9033.

1980 Leopard Plaxton Supreme, 11 metre, 53 (remoquetted) seats, X'Press doors, 6 speed ZF gearbox, side lockers, MoT Oct '92. Stock No. 9009.

SCANIA

1986 K112 Plaxton 3500, 55 reclining seats, demountable toilet, double glazed, retarder, curtains, radio/PA/cassette, MoT 01.03.92. Stock Number 1063.

CUMMINS

1985 Duple 425 (Cummins), 6 speed automatic g/box. 54 recliners, curtains, radio/PA, toilet, drinks machine, TV monitors, continental door, courier seat.

SETRA

1987 S215 HR (Rational) Mercedes, V8 engine, 6 speed ZF gearbox, Voith retarder, 47 recliners, toilet, drinks, fridge, TV, Webasto, curtains, MoT 9.6.92. Stock No. 1072.

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WHERE QUALITY AND VALUE MEET

· QUALITY · QUALITY · QUALITY · VALUE · VALUE · VALUE · VALUE · VALUE · VALUE · VALUE · VALUE · VALUE · VALUE · VALUE ·

DAF 1983 DKFL VAN HOOL ALIZEE-H 12M, 48 recliners, brown moquette, rear floor mounted toilet, continental entrance door, Webasto heating, driver's berth, power operated entrance door, courier seat, curtains, wiring for T.V./video, white/grey/red.
M.O.T. FEBRUARY 1992

VOLVO 1986 (AUG) B10MT (TANDEM) VAN HOOL ALIZEE-SH 12M, 49 recliners, grey/red moquette, rear toilet, driver's berth, courier seat, curtains, fridge, drinks machine, wired for T.V./video, all white.
M.O.T. APRIL 1992

DAF 1986 DKFL PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M, 49/53 recliners, grey/red moquette, demountable rear sunken toilet, continental exit door, courier seat, curtains, power entrance door, wired for T.V./video, cream/duo blue.
M.O.T. FEBRUARY 1992

DAF 1987 DKVL PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M, 51 recliners, red/grey moquette, rear sunken toilet, continental entrance/exit door, tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, drinks machine, power entrance door, wired for T.V./video, TELMA retarder, ABS anti-lock braking, cream/duo blue.
M.O.T. APRIL 1992

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LEYLAND 1985 TIGER 245 JONCKHEERE JUBILEE P50 12M, 48 recliners, brown/orange moquette, rear sunken toilet, continental entrance/exit door, courier seat, tinted side windows/roller blinds, drinks machine, TELMA retarder, power entrance door, wired for T.V./video, white.
M.O.T. T.B.A.

VOLVO 1988 B10M GL VAN HOOL ALIZEE-H 12M, 49 recliners, centre sunken toilet + continental entrance/exit door, double glazed tinted side windows, curtains, Webasto pre-heater, water boiler, fridge, wired for T.V./video, 3 saloon tables supplied loose, power entrance door, courier seat, white/green.
M.O.T. T.B.A.

BOVA 1988 FUTURA FHD 12.290 INTEGRAL 12M, 49/53 str (44/48 recliners + 5 at rear), duo red moquette, centre sunken demountable toilet + continental entrance/exit door, driver's berth, courier seat, double glazed tinted side windows, curtains, power entrance door, white/beige/rose pink.
M.O.T. T.B.A.

VOLVO 1984 (AUG) B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M, 49 recliners, beige/red moquette, rear sunken toilet + continental door, driver's berth, courier seat, Webasto heating, TELMA retarder, drinks machine, curtains, tinted double glazing, power entrance door, wired/boxed for T.V./video, silver/blue.
M.O.T. JULY 1992

BOVA 1985 FUTURA FHD 12.280 INTEGRAL 12M, 49 str., red moquette (44 recliners + 5 at rear) centre sunken toilet, continental door, driver's berth, drinks machine, fridge, Webasto, power entrance door, double glazing, courier seat, curtains, wired for T.V./video, twin fuel tanks, white/red.
M.O.T. JULY 1992

TRADE DESCRIPTIONS ACT;
In detailing these used saloon coaches we have quoted the year of registration and not necessarily the model or year of manufacture.

VALUE ADDED TAX;
Prices quoted are exclusive of V.A.T. and are subject to the normal standard rate.

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24 Feature: Blackpool Illuminations was once the cream at the end of a hard season, but now times have changed. Mike Morgan reports.

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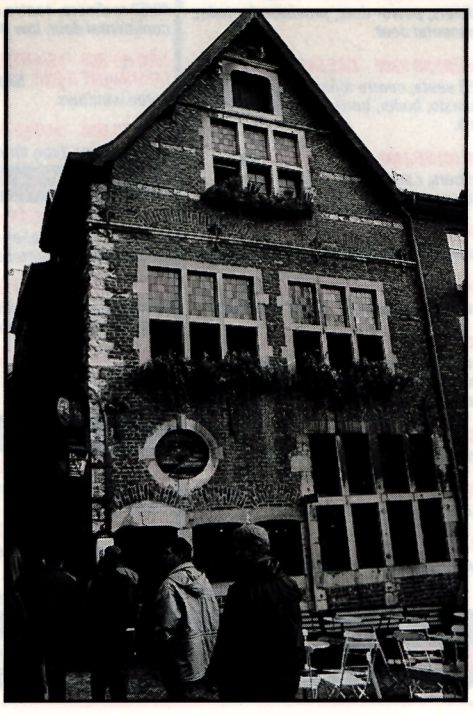
31 Coach Tours & Excursions: We bring you all the news from around the industry, including details of Olau Line's bright predictions for next year; our regular Roadwatch information service; and the first part of a special feature on the delights awaiting coach operators in Germany.



Right: Investigating the attractions of Germany

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COVER PICTURE: David Matthews (main) and, from left to right, Plaxton's new management team: Neil Beresford, Robert Wood, Brian Chivers and John Tuke.

COMMENT

WITH the sudden departure of David Matthews, not only has Plaxton lost a charismatic leader but the PSV industry has lost an energetic and tireless supporter. Both sides of the man have been in danger of being eclipsed by the speed and breadth of change that has swept through the UK bus and coach business during his career. Now is the time to put his achievements on the record.

Having joined a struggling, loss making Kirkby Central in 1981 his first major move was to achieve a management buyout three years later. Then, in March 1987, David Matthews pulled off his master stroke. Having been approached by Plaxton, he reversed the tables. The minnow ate the whale. That provided the foundation on which to build and the means with which to buy it. David Matthews was in his element.

Less than a year later, he had struck his first deal taking over the three Ford dealerships of Isis Motor Group. In typically flamboyant style, he had previously let slip that acquiring some Ford dealerships would be attractive because he had raced Fords on the track.

Next in October 1988, Plaxton bought out French bodybuilder Lorraine from Iveco. Two months later certain assets of Hanlon Ambulance were added to the group's Reeve Burgess minibus division.

1989 was the golden year of Matthews' deal making. In a whirlwind of entrepreneurial activity, he sold the property and assets of Kirkby Trucks for £1.35 million and formed a joint venutre with National Express to supply a standard Rapide vehicle in March alone. In June, he pulled off the biggest deal of all: Plaxton bought the Henlys chain of motor dealerships, which included Mellor Coachcraft and Coleman Milne, for £47.8 million. In July Plaxton bought Duple Services and other Duple assets for £4 million.

In November, two months after the group entered the FT's index of the Top 500 British companies, Plaxton bought the Arlington coach dealership.

In 1990, when the bullish 80s were receding reluctantly but rapidly, the other side of David Matthews took over. Having developed a real feeling for and a businessman's insight into public transport and the way it should be run, he threw himself into lobbying to promote it. He played a crucial role in framing the BCC's influential Buses Mean Business campaign and recently was deeply involved in a similar exercise in SMMT, where he was chairman of the PSV committee.

All this activity took its toll on his family life and he is committed to now spending more time with them.

But, don't write him off yet. At 48, he is more than capable of starting up again when the coach and bus industry regains (as it surely must) some of its former health. If he does, our industry will be the better for it.

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JUST ARRIVED

1985 (B) DAF SB2300 DHS – BERKHOF ESPRIT, 49 recliners, centre toilet, berth, courier seat, continental door.

1983 (A) DAF MB200 DKFL PARAMOUNT 3500, 49 recliners, toilet, courier seat, double glazed.

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ANDREW MARKHAM – London/Home Counties/West (0494) 433048

USED VEHICLE SELECTION

DAF

1988 (E) MB230 CAETANO ALGARVE, *30 recliners, centre kitchen, full exec specification.*

1987 (D) SB2300 – DUPLE 340, *57 recliners, power door, provision for toilet, continental door.*

1986 (D) SB 2300 – CAETANO ALGARVE, *49/53 seats, centre toilet, continental door, Webasto, boiler, berth, boxed/wired for video.*

1986 (C) SB2300 – LAG GALAXY, *53 recliners, courier seat, power door, continental door.*

1984 (B) MB 200 DKFL – DUPLE LASER II, *53 seats, power door, wheel discs, Telma.*

1984 (A) DAF – BOVA CALYPSO, *53 recliners, power door, tinted windows.*

1983 (Y) DAF – BOVA EUROPA II, *47 recliners, courier seat, rear toilet, continental door, Webasto, wired for video.*

1983 (PP) DAF DKTL – ALPHA GT, *53 recliners, power door, curtains.*

1982 (PP) DAF – BOVA EUROPA II, *52 recliners, power door, radio.*

1981 (W) DAF – BOVA EUROPA, *53 seats, power door, tinted windows.*

VOLVO

1988 (E) B10M CAETANO ALGARVE, *49/53 recliners, double glazed, centre toilet, cont door.*

1986 (C) B10M – CAETANO ALGARVE, *49/53 recliners, centre demountable toilet, continental door, low driver facility.*

1980 (V) B58 – (S/AUTO) DUPLE DOMINANT II EXP, *53 seats, power door, tinted windows.*

1980 (V) B58 – DUPLE DOM II EXP, *53 seats, power door, tinted windows.*

MERCEDES/MAN

1983 (PP) 0303 JONCKHEERE P50, *49 recliners, centre toilet, continental door, double glazed, courier seat, fridge.*

1982 (PP) 0303 JONCKHEERE BERMUDA, *49 recliners, centre toilet, continental door, berth, courier seat.*

1982 (PP) MAN – VAN HOOL ACRON, *49 recliners, centre toilet, centre door, drinks, fridge.*

SCANIA

1987 (PP) SCANIA K112 PARAMOUNT 3500, *55 recliners, power door, tinted windows, Telma.*

1986 (C) K112 – BERKHOF ESPRITE, *53 Vogel seats, power door, courier seat, Webasto, Telma.*

LEYLAND/AEC

1987 (E) TIGER (CUMMINS) – DUPLE 340, *53 recliners, courier seat, rear sunken toilet, continental door, double glazed, power door, boxed/wired for video, Telma.*

1987 (D) TIGER 260 – DUPLE 320, *48 recliners, rear saloon mounted toilet, servery.*

1983 (Y) TIGER 245 S/A – DUPLE DOM IV EXP, *53 seats, power doors, SBG front end.*

1982 (X) LEOPARD ZF – DUPLE DOMINANT II, *53 seats, Bristol Dome.*

1981 (W) LEOPARD ZF – DOMINANT III, *57 seats, power door.*

1981 (PP) LEOPARD S/A – PLAXTON SUPREME IV. *50 seats, power door, Telma.*

1979 (V) LEOPARD S/A DOMINANT II, *50 seats, Bristol dome.*

BEDFORD

1987 (D) YNV – CAETANO ALGARVE, *57 seats, power door, wheel trims.*

1986 (C) YNV – PARAMOUNT 3200, *52 seats, toilet, servery, boxed/wired for video.*

1985 (C) YNV – CAETANO ALGARVE, *53 recliners, power door, continental door, tinted windows.*

1981 (W) YMT – DOMINANT IV, *53 seats, power door, radio/PA.*

Full list of vehicles available on request.

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The year quoted denotes the year of first registration not necessarily the year of manufacture.

■PEOPLE

Patrick Jonckheere leaves family firm

PATRICK Jonckheere has left his family's firm, having already resigned as managing director of the bus division to take a job as sales and marketing director.

The departure heralds two promotions at Jonckheere UK - Barry McCrae becomes national accounts manager and Alan White, regional sales manager - and changes to the management structure in Belgium.

Upheaval at the Belgian coachbuilding company began with the resignation of Patrick as managing director and a realignment of the board, which included the appointment of Frans Pattyn in his place.

Patrick Jonckheere: had already quit as MD.

Shortly before the Kortrijk show, Jonckheere was split into two divisions - one to cater for the construction industry and the other for PSVs. The move was accompanied by a £9 million cash injection from the shareholders.

There were strong rumours at the time of a rift between the two brothers, Patrick and Francis, and their father Henri.

Further changes are expected in the commercial department of Jonckheere Bus and Coach.

Jonckheere is said to have spurned interest from United Bus and a Japanese buyer in favour of remaining independent, with the same policies and overall control.

Nobody was available at Jonckheere UK when *Coachmart* went to press.

■NEW COMPANY

Drivers set up new coach business

TWO FORMER coach drivers have set up a new coach operation in Lincolnshire - filling a gap left by the sale of Blands of Stamford to Midland Fox.

Mick Stretton and Charlie Windsor left Barton Buses, having decided to go it alone, and have started trading in Stamford from the registered office of their accountant, S R Howell.

Both men were last week unavailable for comment but they are believed to be operating their own vehicles.

● Former coach operator Steve Bland has left his job at the firm which bought him out, Midland Fox.

■LEGAL

North Mymms banned for service offences

NORTH Mymms Coaches has been banned from operating two local services in the Galleria area of Hatfield after admitting introducing them before the official starting date, at a Cambridge public inquiry.

The Eastern traffic commissioner, Brigadier Compton Boyd, has cancelled the registrations of the services concerned, G1 and G2.

He has also banned the company from registering any new services, or varying the registrations of any existing services, for a period of two months.

Full details of the hearing before the commissioner will be covered in the 'Licensing & Legal' column in a forthcoming issue of *Coachmart*.

■COACH

Reliable expands its premises

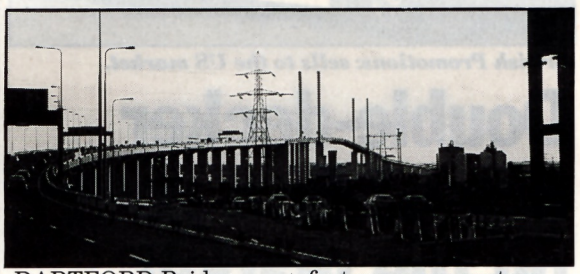
SCOTLAND'S Scania distributor, Reliable Vehicles, has extended its premises with a new 1,200 square metre depot at Newbridge, near Edinburgh.

The £1.5 million building quadruples the covered area of the company's previous Newbridge site.

Reliable now has its headquarters in Renfrew, near Glasgow, a location at Aberdeen, and the new depot.

■COACH

Dartford Bridge owner allays operators' fears



DARTFORD Bridge owner, Dartford River Crossing Ltd, has reassured coach operators worried about the accident risk on the southbound viaduct.

Drivers of highliners and double-decks have been complaining of high winds causing difficult driving conditions and lane closures. And many are worried that a vehicle fire on the bridge (pictured above) could spell disaster.

But DRC general manager, Ron Jones, says that, despite the lack of fire hydrants, a fast-response system worked out between the fire services and the bridge staff should see fire appliances racing from both ends of the bridge after all traffic has been stopped.

'We have new emergency plans which will ensure we can get to incidents on the bridge,' he told *Coachmart*. 'There are no fire hydrants on any major UK bridge, so that does not make Dartford Bridge unique.'

He said in the event of high winds, speed would be restricted.

■OBITUARY

Dennis Blackford

DENNIS Blackford of Isleworth Coaches has died peacefully in West Middlesex Hospital. He had suffered from Parkinson's Disease, but was admitted to hospital two months ago with a chest infection which led to pneumonia.

The four-vehicle coach business has been run by his widow, Doreen, and one of his sons, Andy, since 1985.

An associate company, Fountain Coaches, which ran 20 vehicles, was liquidated last year. At that time the family restarted Isleworth.

Mr Blackford was an active BCC member and well known throughout the industry as a jovial character who supported many coach operator trips.

His funeral was at Hanworth.

BRIEFS

● **ATTENDANCE at last month's Coach & Bus Fair in Kortrijk was up by nearly 20 percent with 17,026 visitors from 56 countries visiting the show, say the organisers. That compares with 14,278 for the 1989 event.**

The next show will take place from October 15 to October 20, 1993.

● THE new Mercedes-Benz 0404 touring coach - launched at Kortrijk last month - has been elected 'Coach of the Year' by specialist journalists from 12 European countries.

The vehicle, which will not be available to UK operators until 1993, received 67 out of a possible 84 votes.

● **EAST London Bus and Coach Company is introducing a new express service - D10 - between Liverpool Street station and Leamouth via Canary Wharf.**

Starting on Monday (November 25), it will operate every 10 minutes at peak and every 20 minutes off-peak.

● LONDON Buses has launched a campaign to try and dissuade passengers from eating and drinking takeaway food and from dropping litter on buses.

Posters on nearly 5,000 red buses and around 800 bus shelters across the capital will encourage passengers to eat up before getting on a bus and drop their litter in a bin or take it home.

● **DOVER is expecting to see record numbers of passengers this year after a busy summer.**

In all, 5.7 million people passed through the port, pushing the 1990 figure up 1.6 percent. Car and motorcycle numbers were up 5.2 percent to 0.88 million but coach numbers remained stable at just under 40,000 - carrying something over 1.6 million people.

■TAKEOVER

Hills' deal due soon

RECEIVERS at Hills of Tredegar say they are days away from announcing a deal which could see the Welsh company sold as a going concern.

A spokesman for receivers Touche Ross said Hills was plunged into insolvency chiefly by losses at its travel agency and by unpaid leasing agreements.

The local contracts it held, and other sides of its business, were financially sound.

Hills of Tredegar: news expected this week.

Hills is still trading with 23 vehicles - around half of which are leased - and honouring contracts. Some of its vehicles have been snatched back by finance companies and some sold by the tax office.

'Hills is still up and running as a business,' said the spokesman. 'A finance company repossessed seven vehicles recently but Hills has been able to service its contracts by hiring in additional requirements.

'The receivers are in discussion with two parties. Business details are being thrashed out as we speak and I am confident there will be an announcement this week.'

■TAKEOVER

British Promotions: sells to the US market.

Double-decker export firm goes on the market

ONE of Britain's most unusual export companies is up for sale.

British Promotions - which buys and sells restored double-decker buses to the United States - is on the market following the retirement of owner and founder, Robert Thomas.

Mr Thomas has sold over 1,000 buses since 1967 - an average of 40 a year - to American tourist resorts and companies for promotions.

The on-going concern comes with full US residency rights, a Norfolk, Virginia-based freehold workshop and offices. Staff is comprised of a general manager, sales representative, four mechanics and four body specialists.

Asking price for the business, which is being sold through transfer agent, the Everett Masson & Furby Group of Hitchin, Herts, is £172,000 plus stock at valuation.

■BUS FARES

Lack of cash blamed for fares scheme hold-up

GREATER Manchester Passenger Transport Authority's policy committee has blamed serious financial constraints on its move to defer a decision on extending its concessionary fares scheme.

In July this year, the committee agreed to investigate the possibility of including partially sighted people, people without the use of both arms and people refused a driving licence on medical grounds, into the concessionary fares scheme.

The scheme is administered by the PTE and currently allows senior citizens and children under 16 to pay 20p on the bus. The executive then reimburses the bus operators the price difference.

Chairman of the policy committee, Councillor Jack Flanagan, said: 'We are sorry that we have had to defer this decision. To extend the concessionary fares would cost the authority over £400,000 and due to the current financial constraints, we are not able at the moment to spend this money.

'We are currently in consultation with the 10 district councils of Greater Manchester about next year's budget and until such a time that the position is clearer, a decision cannot be made.'

■LEGAL

PSVs given clean sheet

THE Vehicle Inspectorate's crackdown on northern Scottish HGV and PSV operators *(Coachmart,* November 14) gave PSVs a virtually clean sheet.

Of 144 offences detected, only FIVE were for PSVs, and four of those were for tacho offences: 'There was one alleged offence for unauthorised use, relating to operating licences, which has yet to be resolved,' said an enforcement spokesman.

■ACCIDENT

Three die in freak coach accident

A BARTON coach driver was praised by police after an horrific accident at Tollerton, near Nottingham.

His almost stationary coach was struck by the jib of an excavator, which ripped through the Plaxton Leopard killing three people and injuring seven.

But police say the toll could have been much higher.

Mick Collins, a driver with Barton Buses for 14 years, slowed down when he saw a transporter carrying the excavator approaching a low railway bridge, believing it did not have enough clearance. The coach was brought almost to a standstill, but the arm of an excavator spun into the side of the coach.

The accident brought a fast reaction from Barton Buses, whose traffic manager, Keith Shayshutt, set off for the scene within minutes of hearing about it from police.

'We dealt with most press enquiries on the site,' said Mr Shayshutt. 'Reporters spoke to the police, witnesses and wanted the facts. I think they were quite sympathetic.'

Mr Shayshutt said training and experience in dealing with the Press stood him in good stead: 'I've had some training and have some experience in dealing with the Press,' he told *Coachmart*.

'I first spoke to the police officer in charge to get his views, then spoke to reporters. The Press was remarkably fair with us, but it was patently obvious we were innocent bystanders.'

Driver Mr Collins (48) was badly shaken but was back at the wheel two days later.

■COACH

Plaxton reacts to operator criticism

PLAXTON has released prices for its new coaches and is responding to operator criticism of its NEC show vehicles by making detail changes on production models.

The company says a 57-seater Premiere 320 on Dennis Javelin starts at £100,000, whereas a 53-seat Premiere 350 body on a Volvo B10M GL costs £120,000.

Excalibur on the same chassis comes out at under £125,000.

Although visitors to the BCC's Coach & Bus '91 were quick to point-out where they thought Plaxton had got it wrong, coach sales director, Clive Hodgson, is anxious to stress the benefits of the new range.

He is convinced that the company has made giant steps in product quality and confirmed his confidence in the new coach.

He told *Coachmart:* 'We know the concept is right. We know the detail is right. Now we need to demonstrate two things to potential buyers; the product's quality and the factory's flexibility.'

Customers looking for more soft trim and improved quality fit of the exterior and interior plastic panels will be reassured, but those wanting choice of vehicle length or alternative shades of trim may have to wait.

Mr Hodgson said: 'We had certain launch priorities, one of which was to major on the best selling 12-metre variants of the new coaches. So, no, that's one element of choice we can't immediately cater for - the operator who needs a shorter vehicle.

'Interior trim colour is a highly personal thing. Buying a coach isn't like buying a car. There's still very often a strong personal influence exerted by the buyer, and my team is out there listening as it takes orders.'

Mr Hodgson stressed that the structure of Excalibur and Premiere meets the requirements of ECE R66, which stipulates that in a roll-over accident the passengers are protected by a survival zone.

He added: 'The new Plaxton coaches are among the first in Europe to achieve this.'

Wind tunnel testing was used to reduce the drag coeffient and this has improved fuel economy.

'We ran a Paramount alongside a Premiere at MIRA and under independent monitoring it achieved a 10 percent improvement in fuel economy with the new coach.

'Aerodynamic efficiency isn't just about Cd numbers; it's about lower fuel costs which should translate into increased bottom line profits.'

The new models do not replace all the top-selling Paramount range - over 5,000 have been sold since its launch in 1982. Double-deck and short-length variants will continue in production.

Premiere: prices are released.

Plaxton chairman quits - see news special on page 13

■BRIEFS

● THE yellow lines on roundabout approaches have halved accidents, says the Transport and Road Research Laboratory.

A reduction of 52 percent in trials means the use of yellow bands will be extended to more A-grade roundabouts next year.

● BUSES and coaches travel at an average motorway speed some 10 mph lower than cars.

Latest DTp figures suggest that more than 70 percent of all cars speed, while only very marginal infringements are detected in 22 percent of all coaches and buses.

● BUCKING a 10-year trend, the accident rate for buses and coaches has increased slightly according to new statistics.

From a low of 4.1 accidents every 100 million PSV kilometres in 1988, 1990 saw 4.6 accidents in the same distance.

Two thirds of serious injuries and deaths were of pedestrians and other road users in collision with PSVs.

● MANCHESTER'S light rail network, Metrolink, was the star attraction at International Light Rail '91, held at the city's G-Mex Centre earlier this week.

● THE Metropolitan Police has issued special instructions and maps for coaches at the Olympia Showjumping Championships, from December 18 to 22.

Full details are available from Sgt Bob Pilbeam, Metropolitan Police, TO 14 (5), Tintagel House, Albert Embankment, London, SE1 7TT.

● CONSULTANTS, Transport Design and Development, are to carry out studies of concessionary travel in Somerset, Northumberland and East Sussex.

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■TRAINING

CPC exams are blasted

CERTIFICATE of Professional Competence examinations are under attack from a leading training school, Friendberry, for alleged question errors.

An error rate of 22.5 percent on 40 questions in part C of the October 1991 examination is being blamed for candidate failures.

Mistakes between five and nearly 30 percent are claimed over the past two years and letters of complaint have gone to MPs.

RSA scheme manager, Peter West, offered reasurance. He said: 'There is a procedure that all registered centres should follow regarding objections to questions. They must write in and if a complaint is upheld, then that question is taken out of the marking scheme.'

The CPC is set by the RSA under the responsibility of the Department of Transport. PSV candidates take a common core paper (part A) and a passenger paper for the national certificate. Part D gives international entitlement.

All questions are multiple choice and candidates must achieve 75 percent on each section.

The exam is a legal requirement for anyone with an operator's licence. Failure means loss of business or, at best, the extra expense of re-entry.

Neil Bevan, partner in Imperial Coaches of Chislehurst, had to retake the CPC.

He told *Coachmart:* 'In December 1990 27.5 percent of part C were bad questions. Since you're only allowed to get 25 percent wrong, it makes the whole thing a lottery.'

Mr Bevan says that there has been considerable representation as to the quality of the exam over a period of time, with no real decrease in the level of error.

Nine questions in the October exam are claimed to have caused unnecessary difficulty to candidates. Reasons vary from lack of clarity and wrong wording in the question to a fundamental error in basic maths.

Head of Friendberry, John Scarborough, is calling for better moderation of the quarterly exams to avoid mistakes in the future.

Here is just one of the contentious questions set in October:

● The purpose of a route costing system is to enable the operator to?:
1 Produce a profit and loss account.
2 Monitor costs against revenue to determine profit.
3 Draw up a balance sheet.
A 2 and 3 only are correct.
B 1, 2 and 3 are correct.
C 2 only is correct.
D 1 and 3 only are correct.

Says Mr Scarborough: 'By deduction, C has to be the right answer since item three, which is nonsense, is in all the others.

'This, however, gives an unsatisfactory answer since number one is perfectly feasible. Yet response one is merely another way of writing number two.'

According to Mr Scarborough, it's not only part C which is giving problems. He says the international part has contained questions which even the BCC couldn't answer.

■COMPANY CLOSURE

Tourmart goes under

ANOTHER non-ABTA bonded company has collapsed. Coach holiday firm, Tourmart, of Northampton, ceased trading earlier this month.

Holidaymakers calling the office are receiving an answerphone message which says: 'It is with the deepest regret that we wish to advise you that this company ceased trading on November 4, 1991. Therefore all future holidays and tours planned by Tourmart will cease to operate.'

It adds: 'The trading office and all communication lines are now unmanned. We sincerely apologise for all disappointment caused.' People are advised to address all correspondence to the firm's registered office in Cliftonville, Northampton.

Tourmart was not a member of ABTA, the Association of British Travel Agents. A spokesman said: 'If companies are licenced by us we will try to get people back from their holidays. If they aren't there is no protection.'

Last month the company was advertising holidays for destinations such as Amsterdam, Paris and the Rhine Valley. A two-day trip was due to leave two days before the company went out of business.

■BUS SALES

SYT plumps for Alexander

SOUTH Yorkshire Transport has chosen Alexander PS-type bodies for a batch of 25 Volvo B10M single deck buses.

The order - to be delivered next year - follows a similar one for 90 vehicles and will bring the total of Alexander-bodied B10Ms in the company's fleet to 115.

■TOURS

Veterans help run service

TWO small coach operators teamed-up with the big boys to run an unusual central London service which carried over 2,500 passengers in seven hours.

Along with five other companies, Delaine, of Bourne, and Marshall, of Newark, took veteran double-deckers down to the capital's Covent Garden.

The seven vehicles ran every 20 minutes on a 2.7-mile circular linking Holborn and Aldwych underground stations.

Operating on hire to Mike Russell's Reading Heritage Travel, the buses ran on a special one-day licence from London Transport.

The unconventional service was linked to the LT funded London Transport Museum special event last Saturday.

This included a display in Covent Garden Piazza and the chance to view the current exhibition as well as the bus ride - all for just £5.

Marshall: supplied former Gash Daimler CDVG.

The organiser, Andrew Hayward, told *Coachmart:* 'The event has been a tremendous success. At one point during the day the crowds waiting at the stops were large enough to prove that bus travel remains popular.

'It just proves there is interest in public transport.'

The vehicles supplied were all front-engined 'deckers from the post-war era.

Delaine provided its unique Yeates-bodied Leyland PD3 while Marshall supplied a former Gash Daimler CDVG.

The others were former Aldershot & District, Reading Transport, Ipswich, Brighton Hove & District and Bournemouth vehicles.

■COACH

London coach driver escapes prosecution

THE Crown Prosecution Service has dropped a contentious prosecution against a London coach driver accused of breaking bus priority regulations.

Richard Heslop was stopped by a police patrol after taking the 'buses only' turning into Oxford Street from Regent Street. He promptly took legal advice because he was convinced that the law did not distinguish between a bus or a coach.

His solicitors, Wedlake Saint, entered a plea of 'not guilty' and a request for an adjournment of the hearing at Marlborough Street magistrates court. The contention being that a coach is defined as a large bus when it is constructed or adapted to carry more than eight seated passengers in addition to the driver.

Mr Heslop's Dubrava coach should therefore be defined as a bus under regulation three sub-section two of the Road Vehicles Construction and Use Regulations 1986.

Wedlake Saint sent the papers to the Crown Prosecution Service. Subsequently, crown prosecutor, Ralph Delbourgo, served notice that he did not want the proceedings to continue. Mr Heslop was granted costs.

Although the case relates to a compulsory left turn traffic sign, it is seen as the second success in the campaign to give coaches and buses equal rights to priority schemes.

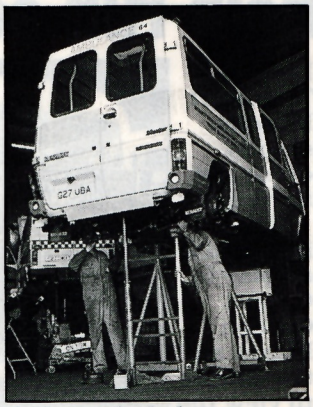
The BCC's 'Putting Passengers First' manifesto launched last month called for coach access to all bus priority lanes.

■ENGINEERING

AirLift goes for welfare market

RENAULT Master conversions can now be fitted with a 'kneeling' facility - thanks to air suspension specialist, AirLift.

Aimed at the welfare market, the retro-fitted system incorporates a ramp allowing the rear of the vehicle to drop to nine inches, ground to step.



A Mersey Ambulance service vehicle being fitted with AirLift.

The Bromley, Kent, firm claims there is no intrusion into the cabin space, and that full air suspension on the rear axle is restored in 22 seconds.

Already the system has been taken up by Mersey Regional Ambulance Service, which has ordered 21 units for delivery this month.

Warranty on the £3,500 conversion is two years, and AirLift claims the suspension and kneeling facility is easy to use since it has been aimed at volunteer-driven buses.

■ENGINEERING

IMS' wheels improve passenger comfort

PRECISION cast wheels give better comfort for coach and bus passengers than normal pressed steel units, says specialist supplier, Industrial Machinery Suppliers.

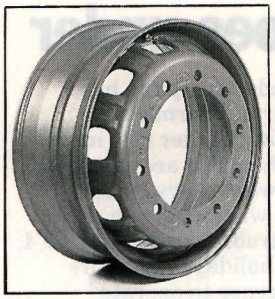
IMS, sole UK agent for George Fischer products, has launched Monolex wheels made from nodular iron.

It claims the GF products are the only high-quality cast wheels available in the UK.

Monolex wheels are built to fine tolerances and meet ISO, ETRTO, DIN and other internationally-accepted standards.

Grant Terry, IMS sales manager, says: 'This results in an exceptional rotational concentricity combined with minimal wobble.'

In addition to smooth running, this extreme accuracy minimises stress fluctuations and reduces wear on tyres, steering mechanism and brakes. Accurately machined securing holes gives reduced bending stressed on fixings.



Monolex: high-quality cast wheels.

The casting process allows Monolex wheels to be designed for optimum cooling of both brake drum and tyre.

■TOURS

French tour firm announces new coach contracts

FRENCH tour operator, Wagon Lits, has awarded its 1992 coaching contract to Kingston Upon Hull City Transport Group company, Voyage National of France, and its English counterparts, Kingstonian and York Pullman.

In an exclusive arrangement, Wagon Lits' clients will be transported in mainland Europe by the Lille-based company's coaches and by Kingstonian, of Hull, or York Pullman, in the UK.

KHCT says that while it has secured deals like this before, it is the first time a major client has specified this arrangement.

Its other mainland European company, Kivits Reizen of the Netherlands, is already regularly used to move clients from North Sea Ferries arrivals at Rotterdam on Dutch tours and York Pullman transports patrons from northern France on 'Coronet Tours' and Yorkshire weekends from the ferry between Zeebrugge and Hull.

Keith Bastow, KHCT's group chief executive, said: 'This is a testimony to the quality of both product and service and reflects the benefit of being involved in tripartite arrangements for the countries concerned.'

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ABC
MEMBER OF THE AUDIT BUREAU OF CIRCULATIONS

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Missing passenger, Madge Brown. ***Have you seen this woman?***

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Madge was our model passenger and some unscrupulous person has literally stolen her from an exhibition. She was like one of the family, a friend and now she's gone.

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PLAXTON UNDER MATTHEWS

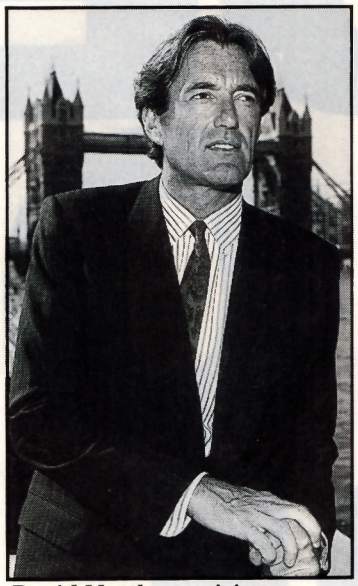
1981
January: David Matthews and new management moves into Kirkby Central - then loss making and having a net worth of around £2 million.
1984
March: Kirkby Central bought by management.
1987
May: Reverse takeover of Plaxton by Kirkby Central.
1988
April: Plaxton acquires Isis Motor Group for £2.5 million cash.
October: Plaxton acquires Carrosserie Lorraine, France.
December: Plaxton acquires certain assets of Hanlon Ambulance.
1989
March: Plaxton sells the property and assets of Kirkby Trucks for £1.35 million.
June: Plaxton acquires Henlys Vehicle Group - including Mellor Coachcraft and Coleman Milne - for £47.8 million.
July: Plaxton acquires Duple Services Ltd and certain Duple assets for £4 million.
September: Plaxton enters Financial Times Top 500 Index of British Public Companies.
December: Plaxton announces sale of three motor distributorships - Trowbridge, Bolton, and Bordeaux - for £6.5 million.
1990
March: Motor Group announces further disposals totalling £5.7 million.
March: Plaxton Group announces 83 percent leap in pre-tax profits to £8.7 million for 1989. Its coach and bus operation contributed 58 percent.
May: 135 jobs go at Plaxton subsidiary Reeve Burgess.
September: 100 jobs go at Plaxton's bus and coach operations.
November: Plaxton axes 99 more jobs at Scarborough.
1991
March: Plaxton announces 1990 profits down to £4.2 million with the coach and bus operation losing £1.2 million.
April: A further 44 job cuts announced at Scarborough plus a wage freeze. It also reveals plans to shut down its Reeve Burgess operation in Chesterfield.
June: Colin Cowdery, who played a major part in the formation of the group resigns from the board because of ill health.
September: The group reveals a £4.5 million loss with the bus and coach division losing £1.6 million in the six months ended June 1991.
November: David Matthews quits as group chairman.

Management clash prompts David Matthews' resignation...

DAVID Matthews, chairman and architect of the Plaxton Group, has shocked the industry by resigning.

Following his departure last week, group managing director, Robert Wood, has assumed overall control of the company by becoming chief executive. Mr Wood joined Plaxton's main board after the group took over the Henlys motor dealership chain in 1989. And Mr Matthews' sudden departure is being widely interpreted by the industry as the result of a clash of management styles and emphasis between the two men.

Mr Wood has publicly credited Mr Matthews with being the man behind Plaxton's phenomenal growth during the late 1980s: 'He provided the entrepreneurial leadership and flair which successfully developed Plaxton into a significant coach, bus and motor vehicle group.'



David Matthews: visionary behind Plaxton in the 1980s.

But he is also known to have seen that same entrepreneurial flair as being of less relevance in today's recession-hit markets and he has already made two appointments to strengthen the mainstream managerial strength of Plaxton's board.

John Tuke, managing director of Plaxton's Henlys-based motor dealership division, has joined the main board as an executive director. Another ex-Henlys' man, Michael Doherty, now deputy chairman and chief executive of Canadian-owned Norcros plc, has been appointed non-executive chairman of the reconstituted board.

Neil Beresford stays on as managing director of the manufacturing companies and Brian Chivers continues as finance director.

Mr Matthews (48) has not sold his 7 percent shareholding in Plaxton, but it is unsure what he intends to do next. He is known to be involved with two property companies and is expected to spend more time with his family.

... as Wood scotches sale speculation

ROBERT Wood has been quick to scotch industry speculation that Plaxton would now split the group into two distinct parts as a prelude to selling off the coach and bus building.

David Matthews was well-known for his strongly held faith in public transport and for his energetic lobbying of politicians to further its cause.

But, with his departure following hard on the heels of ex-retail managing director Colin Cowdery's, Plaxton was seen by the market to have finally severed its links with the old Kirkby regime and lost its true coach men.

The subsequent appointment of two new directors both strongly connected with Henlys only strengthened this view.

But Mr Wood is adamant that no dramatic reorganisation is planned. 'There will be no change of policy,' he told *Coachmart*.

'The policy has been carefully thought out over the last 18 months.'

'There will be no change of policy' - chief executive, Robert Wood.

He is also anxious to stress his own coach credentials: 'I've spent the majority of my time over the last 18 months working closely on our bus and coach division. I am personally very closely involved in the business and I'm highly committed to it.

'We have two balanced legs in the PSV and car businesses. We don't want to cut either off.'

But, he is under no illusions about the depth of the recession which has severely depressed coach and bus sales this year. And he expects that pressure to continue next year: 'In the last 18 months, we have sustained heavy losses. The total business will move out of losses into the black next year. But the bus and coach business is going to take until 1993 to make sensible returns. As we go through 1992, it will become an improving situation.'

Robert Wood: says no dramatic reorganisation is planned.

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You've been buying...You've been buying...You've been buying...You've been buying...

First Pointers join the Yorkshire Traction fleet

THE first 9.8-metre long Reeve Burgess Pointers have entered service with Yorkshire Traction.

Six are being used on the company's busy Economylink routes in Barnsley.

The aluminium framed vehicles, based on long wheelbase Dennis Dart chassis, have 41 seats, a luggage pen and can carry up to 18 standees.

Yorkshire Traction's chairman and managing director, Frank Carter, told *Coachmart:* 'We are using them on high frequency services to three peripheral housing estates where their manoeuvrability is proving invaluable.

'Reaction to the Pointers from both our customers and drivers has been first rate.'

Yorkshire Traction runs 370 buses and coaches in and around south and west Yorkshire.

The newcomers are the first Dennis vehicles in the Yorkshire Traction fleet.

Left: The first Reeve Burgess Pointers are now working on Yorkshire Traction's Economylink routes in Barnsley, South Yorkshire.

Castleways plumps for a new Optare StarRider

TREVOR Fogarty, of Castleways of Winchcombe, has taken delivery of his first Optare StarRider coach.

The vehicle was seen on the Optare stand at Coach & Bus '91 and Mr Fogarty intends using it for both stage carriage and private hire work.

It is equipped with 29 high backed luxury coach seats, complete with armrests and trimmed in moquette to match the roof centre trim.

The new StarRider boasts full length parcel racks, complete with forced air vents, reading lights for individual passengers and also a large capacity luggage boot.

For every day operation it is fitted with a destination and route number display and a ticket machine mounting bracket.

The body structure of the StarRider is heavy duty steel box sections, welded together to form a safety cage.

It is wax injected and surface coated using the Dinol anti-corrosion treatment and cladded with modular exterior panelling which is a combination of alloy sheeting and glass reinforced plastic.

You've been buying...You've been buying...You've been buying...You've been buying...

Salvador Caetano vehicles are so popular with coach operators

SALVADOR Caetano's Optimo II has been proving popular with coach operators up and down the country.

A luxury GL version has been delivered to the long established Southampton fleet of Eassons Coaches. Finished in the operator's distinctive buff and brown livery, the specification includes full moquette seats with courier seat, power plug door and tinted single glazed windows with full draw curtains.

Individual reading lights are also fitted and the musical entertainment is provided by Blaupunkt.

Avis Car Hire has taken delivery of another Optimo from Salvador Caetano (UK), which is based at Heather in Leicestershire.

The chosen specification featured reduced seating capacity with extra luggage pens fitted to the interior passenger compartment.

It also boasts a power plug door, forced air ventilation, Blaupunkt stereo equipment, pegged floor covering, tinted windows with full draw curtains and a large boot.

Aberdeen-based Burns Coaches also chose a Caetano when it decided to update its fleet. It opted for a luxury touring coach, mounted on a MAN 10.180 rear engined chassis.

The bodywork specification included 35 reclining seats, courier seat, tinted double-glazed windows with full draw curtains, power plug entrance door, full height rear continental door, forced air ventilation, individual reading lights and full soft trim with centre gangway carpet.

Merc for Escort

ESCORT Coaches, of Enfield, Middlesex, has added a 24-seat Mercedes-Benz 609D diesel minicoach from PSV specialist, Made To Measure, of Stockport.

It joins the company's fleet of 11 vehicles which carry out contract work for Barnet Borough Council and private hire. Specification includes high back Capri seating by Kustombuilt, full soft trim interior colour coded to the seats, large Dropwell boot and one-piece power door.

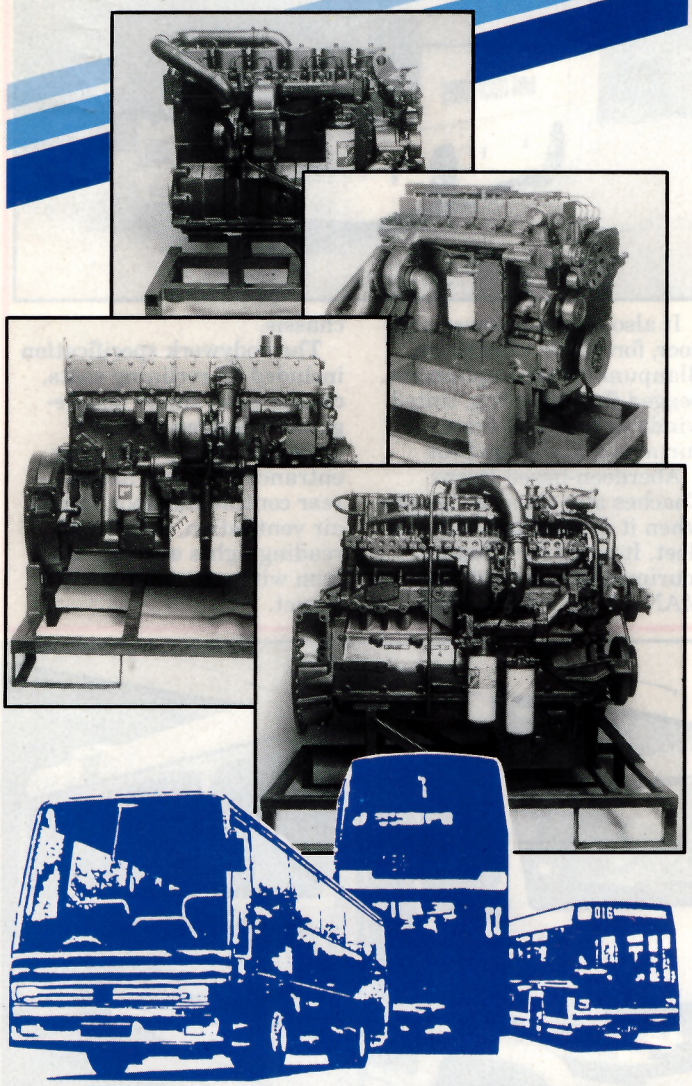
In-coach entertainment is by a Blaupunkt stereo/radio cassette with four speakers. It also has an electric intake/extract unit, saloon heater, lift up roof vent, full length luggage racks with driver's locker and tinted windows and decorative curtains and wheel trims.

The exterior is finished in Mercedes' white with signwriting and coachlines in red, silver and blue.

Cummins Diesel

Cummins Diesel's complete range of factory remanufactured engines – a new lease of life to passenger vehicles

Cummins Diesel is offering bus and coach operators factory exchange engines and components remanufactured to new engine standards at very competitive prices.
Cummins "ReCon" remanufactured engines for bus and coach applications are visually indistinguishable from their new Cummins counterparts and carry a full two year parts and labour warranty.
Cummins powered bus and coach models can be re-engined using "ReCon" engines ready for a second life as reliable and durable as the first, backed nationwide by Cummins Diesel's professional after sales organisation.
Cummins Diesel also offer 'off the shelf' availability on genuine Cummins parts as well as bus and coach repower packages, engine repair and contract maintenance schemes.



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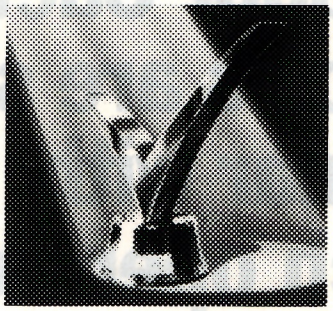

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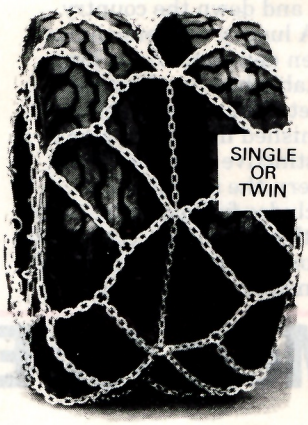

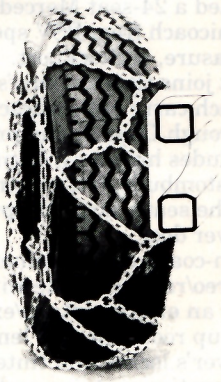

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A case of supply and demand...

Features editor, Mike Morgan, investigates controversial claims that small coach operators are left in the cold when it comes to the supply of new vehicles.

LIFE has been tough of late for PSV manufacturers. We have witnessed a decline in trade that has sent shivers right down to the very roots of the industry.

Top men on the supply side have been posturing with the Government to alert those with influence to the full force of the doom and gloom scenario. Then along comes a breath of fresh air - the BCC's Coach & Bus '91.

Against the trends (and very welcome) the doors of the NEC opened on a refreshing flood of optimism. Buyers and sellers alike rejoiced in the courageous stand taken by our industry in times of adversity.

New models gave new hope. That happy truth of all recessions was dawning - they come to an end. No industry, no matter how restrained, can delay investment forever.

We had the evidence. Mounting orders were key expressions of faith in Plaxton's new body, there were flowing tributes to Optare's new Spectra and the Volvo stand was besieged. Its star was the B6R - a shy young newcomer standing quietly before an adoring public.

Operator, Gordon Robson, wanted to buy one new bus. No-one could supply.

Caetano stepped boldly forward and presented Algarve II. But there was an ace up the Portuguese corporate's sleeve - no other coach builder could supply on B6R until the middle of 1992.

Like Plaxton, Dennis is wooing the Europeans. Its first moves at Kortrijk were watched with interest.

On the operating side, the big boys announced orders which brought a fanfare from the Volvo stand with the regularity of departures from Digbeth coach station.

The small operators could be excused for feeling like Cinderella. Come midnight would the illusion dissolve before their eyes?

Coach & Bus '91: a breath of fresh air for the industry.

Optare Spectra: received glowing tributes.

Was this really the same industry they'd been reading about for the past 18 months? What happened to the dire warnings - those distress signals that had aroused our consciousness during the dark days of redundancies and liquidations?

One small operator stepped forward from the crowd to test the reality.

Gordon Robson was to confront the giants of the manufacturing industry.

His sling was armed with a single shot - he wanted to buy one bus. Not just any old bus, but a new one.

He came away without placing an order because he says nobody could supply what he wanted.

This is no fairy story. In liberated Britain, the deregulated bus and coach industry contains many Robson Town Service-type operations.

They were inspired by deregulation, spurred-on by privatisation and encouraged by a tendering process which supports the superior operating efficiencies of the cost-conscious small operator.

The new order dictates that you buy for a new contract or a new service. In a competitive environment this means short notice. ▶

Plaxton: mounting show orders were expressions of faith in its new body.

◀ Robson wanted to buy a new bus to meet a tendered service - at short notice.

'There's no good quality used buses to be had,' complains Mr Robson, 'they just aren't there.

'I was at the point where I wanted to buy new yet, despite the protestations of the suppliers, they have no stock.'

Mr Robson, who claims to have run the first deregulated bus from Stockton town hall at one minute past midnight on D-day in 1985, raised the problem because he fears the recession has left the small operator disadvantaged.

Is there an unpalatable legacy of recession, and therefore a short-term hazard on the long road to recovery, or is it a flaw in the free market strategy?

Manufacturers who cut back in the face of melting order books are now working with reduced resources.

They face a dichotomy - a chicken and egg situation. What comes first - big orders or increased output? In the present climate no financial backer will support any initiative, no matter how well intentioned, unless there is a copper bottomed guarantee.

Bodybuilders are claiming that the development costs for new products are so horrendous that minimum orders of 20 or 30 are needed.

Irizar dealer, Tramontana, talks of the need to put £2 million up-front before the new Century coach can come into the UK *(Coachmart,* November 7, 1991).

Mercedes 0405: Gordon Robson was told there will be a delay until next July.

Manufacturers who cut back in the face of melting order books are now working with reduced resources.

Plaxton put £3.5 million into the new Premiere/Excalibur/Prestige and Mercedes ploughed in a colossal figure to develop the 0404.

Of course there are operators who are content to place forward orders, and others quick off the mark to get ahead of the queue.

Caetano will supply the first £79,500 coach-bodied B6R in the UK. Jeffs, of Brackley in Northamptonshire, is taking two and Chris Shears, of Chalfont Coaches, has signed-up for one.

Mr Robson was less fortunate. He said: 'We went to Volvo for a B6R and eventually the truth came out. There are only 10 pre-production models and they cannot deliver any more until May/June.'

Back at Volvo Bus Ltd's headquarters in Warwick, Bill Russell, director of product marketing, confirmed that the supply will be limited.

He told *Coachmart:* 'We are very happy with the tremendous interest and the very positive response. We've known that it would be tight on delivery and it's always embarrassing when we can't supply what customers' demand.'

Mr Russell stressed that volume demand was for buses, but admitted that Volvo was surprised at the B6R demand on the coach side.

Volvo has responded by starting B6R production at Workington to supplement supply from the Steyr plant in Vienna.

The extra capacity should come on stream before June/July next year when the product will be available to all UK Volvo dealers.

Mr Russell explained why first coach sales were with Caetano.

He said: 'That's what the early customers wanted.'

Big suppliers seem to be understood by big operators, but the small fry don't have time for sympathy.

Although Volvo featured in the first bulk orders for Plaxton Excalibur/Premiere from the country's biggest companies, some other buyers have turned to Scania.

David Perry, of Slingsby near York, placed an order for one Premiere before the show. He likes the rear engine concept, but has bought Volvo previously.

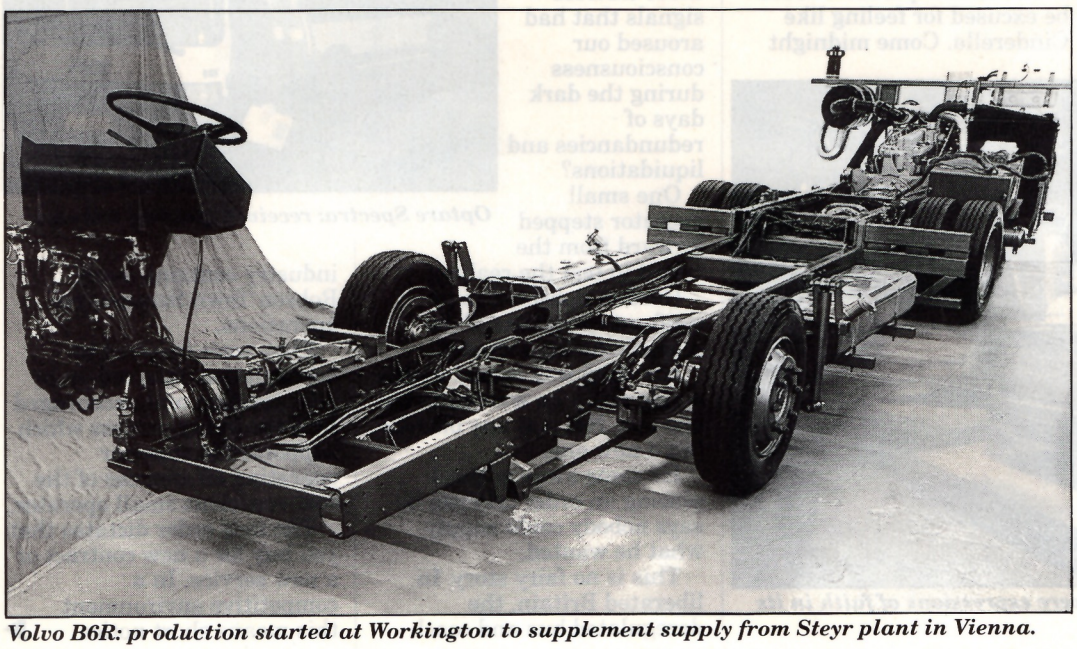
Perry's K93 is expected for April/May delivery and will run on the company's own tours alongside nine other vehicles.

Harry Shaw, of Coventry, was among the privileged to see the new Plaxton in advance of the show.

He signed-up with Scania dealer Stuart Johnson for two K113s. Both will have the cheaper Premiere body - one with 3.2-metre body, the other a highliner.

Harry's son and company general manager, John, said: 'You've got to be honest. If you look at Paramount over five years, they've improved tremendously. I was an Excalibur fan, but then Premiere is cheaper so we went for one of each height.'

Delivery is for the start of the UK touring season in March.



Volvo B6R: production started at Workington to supplement supply from Steyr plant in Vienna.

John Shaw added: 'There was no problem over supply.'

Supply is a different story for Mr Robson looking for his illusive service bus. After finding Volvo couldn't deliver he went to Dennis and found a similar story.

Next he thought: 'I'm prepared to have a go at a new Merc.'

Hidden behind a row minibuses was the £55,000 0405 chassis. 'Sorry, but the factory can't possibly build one until July and there's a 6.5 percent price rise.'

'That's no good,' complained Mr Robson, 'I need one in April.'

Ian Soden, Mercedes-Benz UK bus and coach sales manager, put the record straight.

He said: 'Most people will at least try a vehicle before placing an order.

'He is expecting us to stock vehicles when the purpose was to show what we intended to supply.

'Bus people accept that there's a lead time. It's sound commercial sense to go through things properly, taking careful steps.

Dennis: big sales push at Coach & Bus '91 show.

'There was a lot of interest, but they do appreciate that I want them to take the opportunity to try one of the two demonstrators first.'

Mr Soden expressed the manufacturers' dilemma from a German perspective.

He pointed to the development costs and said: 'It's a struggle to get that back.'

However, the political upheaval in eastern Europe has presented Mercedes and its other compatriots with a market hungry for new product.

Consequently, the delay in satisfying new orders stretches to six months on chassis alone.

Disheartened by the response, Mr Robson left the Coach & Bus '91 show convinced there was no recession.

He concluded: 'What is going to happen is that prices are going to go through the roof. We will be back to the bus grant era when you couldn't get the vehicle you wanted.'

Mr Soden countered swiftly: 'In the market place as it is today, where would we be if we started talking-up prices? We'd never sell anything.'

Whatever the supply conundrum - manufacturers either hit by recession or embarrassed by a surfeit of orders - it is the small operator on the receiving end. There is a mis-match of supply and demand conditions that are failing to service the industry well.

Big suppliers seem to be understood by big operators, but the small fry don't have time for sympathy. They want the goods now.

Operators must respond rapidly to market changes. Yet, despite the virtues of a free market economy, the manufacturers are stifled by constraints which leave them badly placed to do likewise.

What price a new bus for town service in Stockton?... the delivery date: Easter 1992.

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VANHOOL

Madge Brown is kidnapped

POLICE are looking for a short-sighted coach operator following the kidnapping of Madge Brown - the darling of the Allison Transmission team.

Madge was last seen taking a rest on a bus seat at Coach & Bus '91. Then she was gone.

Allison's national fleet sales manager, Dennis Priddy, was torn apart by her disappearance.

In an emotional appeal for her safe return, he said: 'She was like a mother to me. Never a cross word, kind to animals, loved children... whatever will her husband Cyril do?'

A spokesman for the police said there was a theory that a coach operator had taken her home, thinking she was his wife, or possibly a lady of the night: 'We are looking for a man who is as short-sighted as Madge, and has a fetish for polyester dresses and duck-head umbrellas.

'He may have picked her up believing she is, as we say in the force, a working girl but he will be mightily disappointed with her performance, since she is an inanimate object made of latex.

'But it's just possible that he has mistaken her for his wife, in which case he may not yet have discovered his mistake.'

With a lump in his throat, Dennis Priddy has agreed to let Madge's husband Cyril sit in for her but points out that no-one can replace Madge - except the man who stole her...

Madge: gone missing.

Irish workers say 'non' to French cuisine

ACCORDING to *The Sunday Times*, the 580 Irish workers at the EuroDisney site have just come to the end of a new potato famine.

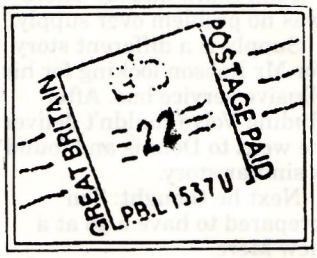
Say what you like about Irishmen, but they do have standards when it comes to grub. And the French version of Meat and Two Veg didn't come up to scratch.

'We had the French catering staff prepare the sort of thing the men like. But they said everything still tasted of garlic,' said a site manager.

The French spuds went, replaced by a lorry-load of finest Ulster tatties. Heinz beans, Branston pickle and HP sauce were other essentials. And out went the Cordon Bleu cooks, replaced by Italians.

Of course, it's not quite Irish food but the lads seem to have taken to spud and bean pizza...

Send your letters to:
The editor, *Coachmart*,
EMAP Response
Publishing Ltd,
Wentworth House,
Wentworth Street,
Peterborough, PE1 1DS,
Or by fax: 0733 62656



The editor is always pleased to receive letters for publication in *Coachmart* and will, if requested, publish these anonymously. But please attach your name and address for our own information.

Shearings' staff were so helpful

From Paddy Winter

SIR

I would like to thank Shearings for the way it helped us in the summer. At 4.30 am on a Saturday in August, we were woken up by a phone call from my wife's father with sad news that my mother-in-law had been taken ill and would not be able to catch the feeder coach to join Shearings' Emerald Isle Tour.

My wife then rang Shearings' emergency number and was assured that if my mother-in-law did not improve steps would be taken to implement the holiday insurance policy it had arranged.

On Saturday evening the driver of the tour coach rang me from Newcastle Emlyn in Pembroke in the hope that we could make a quick trip by car to meet the coach at Fishguard. Unfortunately, my mother-in-law was not fit to travel and the holiday had to be cancelled. We were very impressed by the efficient and sympathetic way our problems were dealt with.

In September they were able to enjoy the tour, which was enlivened by gales. The problems for Shearings must have been horrific, but my wife was returned to Keswick a little late and rather tired and the only passenger on a 'super coach'.

I think they have already planned their next tour with Shearings.

PADDY WINTER
PADDY WINTER TAXI
AND MINIBUS HIRE
BROADNESS
BASSENTHWAITE
KESWICK
CUMBRIA

Clarification on Kortrijk trip

From David Loyne

SIR

As secretary of the East Durham and Sunderland Coach Operators Association, I have been asked to write - nay complain - about the statement made by your publication over the misbehaviour of some coach operators on *Coachmart's* trip to Kortrijk.

The association feels that if you can't name the guilty parties - and as you well know at least one guilty party wasn't even a coach operator - you should assure everyone that it wasn't any member of the north east contingent.

In passing, please extend our sincere thanks to everyone concerned for a very pleasurable trip.

DAVID LOYNE
SECRETARY
EAST DURHAM AND SUNDERLAND COACH
OPERATORS ASSOCIATION

How to keep informed about the Single Market

Q I WAS not able to get up to the *Coachmart* seminar on going 'Into Europe', but I would like to be kept informed about what is happening in the run-up to the so called Single Market.

Do you have any suggestions where I can get information from?

B McS, Dorset

A CARRY on reading *Coachmart,* for a start. I am sure that the transition to the Single Market will feature in these pages quite a lot over the next 18 months or so.

You should also get onto the Department of Trade & Industry's 'Europe Open For Business' mailing list. You will get free updated fact sheets, a newsletter and advice where to get assistance.

Ring the DTI Hotline on 081-200-1992 to get plugged into Europe there.

Another source of free advice and consultation is being provided through a national network of European information centres. I think Exeter is your nearest - ring it on 0392 214085.

Finally, information and advice relating to transport is available from Mrs N Scotts at the Department of Transport on 071-276-4957.

Q WE run a couple of eight-seater non-PSVs. As part of our coach fleet and on tendered work which we do for the county council it requires us to use PCV licensed drivers in these eight-seaters.

This causes no problems as all our drivers are PCV holders. But when we work for the district council with these eight-seaters it requires the drivers to have been tested by its own examiner and issued with a licence (which costs £40) as Hackney Carriage drivers.

Surely this is not necessary if they already hold a PCV licence?

AM, East Midlands

A THERE is no doubt whatsoever that district councils (outside of London) have the authority to test and licence both drivers of, and vehicles used as, Hackney Carriages - however anomalous it may seem that the same man, driving the same vehicle, needs a different class of licence to do a different class of work!

I do not, therefore, think that there is any future in you trying to persuade your local district council otherwise.

What might, however, be a more fruitful approach would be to suggest that the district council could agree that the holding of a PCV exempts the person from their testing, and any character vetting procedures, and he could therefore be granted a Hackney Carriage licence on demand - and perhaps at a reduced fee too.

QUESTIONS answers

Questions on any aspect of coach operation that is giving you problems should be sent to: Marksman, c/o *Coachmart,* Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough, PE1 1DS, or by fax: 0733 62656.

Q CAN you tell me what is involved in this new rule about headlight beam setting?

TSN, Glasgow

A NOT if you want it in technical terms! I did read them somewhere but found them quite uncomprehensible.

In layman's language, beam settings to date have concentrated on not dazzling oncoming traffic, but paid scant regard to whether there was enough light for the driver of the vehicle being tested to have sufficient spread of illumination to drive safely.

The new standards measure whether there is too much dip and whether the sideways spread of the beam is adequate for safe driving. Many existing beam setters will not do this without modification (and the back of the garage door is even less likely to give the required result!).

I do not know whether this is universal, as the agency status of the Vehicle Inspectorate has resulted in test stations falling over themselves to be helpful, profitable, cost centres.

My local test station is recommending operators to send vehicles for test with the headlight surrounds removed and it will allow adjustments to be made on its beam setters to meet pass standards.

Q THROUGH a tour customer's comment regarding an 'optional extra trip' which I knew nothing about, I discovered that a driver had been selling these extra outings whilst on tour.

He was able to totally conceal the evidence of this from tachograph scrutiny since removing a fuse on a BlOM totally stops any movement at all in the all-electronic tacho-head.

Should this fuse not be protected by a seal so that this undetectable non-use of the tachograph is not possible?

GR, Notts

A I DO not think that a seal is a legal requirement on such a fuse, although your suggestion has merit in practice.

If you can find a fuse carrier with a sealable cover I am sure that there is nothing to stop you fitting, and sealing, it yourself. Whatever you, or legislators, do, some drivers will always find a way around it, but when this sort of 'concealment' is detected (by silent checks) the penalty is likely to be far greater than for a simple hours offence. Imprisonment is not unknown in this sort of circumstance.

This could extend to the employer too if he has aided and abetted the offence. I hope that at the very least you have a written record of the disciplinary action you took against your offending (ex?) driver.

Marksman will answer more of your questions in *Coachmart* on December 5

LAST NIGHT ON THE PROM

Blackpool Illuminations was once the cream at the end of a hard season. Now it is bread and butter work that is not without its pitfalls. Mike Morgan examines the difficulties.

WITHOUT Blackpool's extended season September would spell the end of the seasonal day trip business for another year.

Blackpool is king of the lights' trade and coach operators have relied on bumper crops of autumnal business.

In good years it's the icing on the cake. But when times are tough the lights' traffic comes as a salvation. However, for all but the most local of operators, there's the added nightmare of keeping the trip legal. Juggling the tacho regs requires an intimate knowledge of the over complex EC drivers' hours rules.

Draw a four-and-a-half hour ring round Blackpool and you have a pretty comprehensive catchment area.

Blackpool's hoteliers and a large section of the coach industry are mutually dependent on the lights.

Irene Boden, proprietor of the Sandringham Hotel on Station Road, confessed: 'The only time you can guarantee getting people in is at weekends during the lights.'

Blackpool is always busy during the illuminations. This year it ran from August 30 to November 3 - next year the switch-on is a week later on September 4, extending the season beyond Guy Fawkes' Night to November 8.

At first, Blackpool's lights were the high spot for hot-bloodied Lancastrians enjoying tripe and onions or hot pot in the cold October air.

Now the motorway network guides coachloads across the Pennines and up from the Potteries, Black Country - or even further afield.

If it's within range of the tachograph laws, then Blackpool is on the programme.

Draw a four-and-a-half hour ring round the resort and you have a pretty comprehensive catchment area.

Here lies the biggest headache for the operator. How to schedule for the unpredictable trek along the promenade. If you're lucky you can be through in half-an-hour, otherwise the Blackpool crawl can take over four hours.

Blackpool: needs coach business as much as coach operators need it.

Then it's hard right down Red Bank Road and a quick dash for the M55 and home.

By then the passengers are desperate for a service area and the driver is stretching his drivers' hours to the limit.

Paul Beardsley, manager of Kingsman Travel based in Matlock and Sheffield, said: 'The volume of traffic is unpredictable. For us there's no problem with hours, but the biggest problem is the next morning.'

Kingsman likes to keep it simple. Drivers are scheduled for a 15-hour day. 'If they're back within 13 hours, so much the better.'

Marksman alerted operators to the flexibility built into the regs. While expressing surprise at the lack of understanding shown by ALB of Somerset who had problems on a trip to Blackpool, he went on to clarify the rules (*Coachmart,* October 24, 1991).

Blackpool: once just the high spot for hot-bloodied Lancastrians.

Operators at rest in Blackpool: John Shaw, of Harry Shaw, of Coventry, says loadings are down this year.

The biggest headache for operators is how to schedule the unpredictable trek along the promenade.

He said: 'For more than five years the daily rest has been 11 hours which can be reduced to nine on three days a week provided the reduction is compensated during the following week.

'But there is the alternative of having a total of 12 hours rest which can be broken into one period of at least eight hours plus not more than two periods of not less than one hour.'

Marksman does right to remind operators of the extra room to manoeuvre and the handy reference on page nine of the *Coachmart* Guide. But don't forget the effects of different rest periods on the working day.

The Department of Transport's booklet PSV 375 spells out the implications of 'spreadover'.

While the EC regs don't use the term, spreadover is taken to mean a period of time within which a driver is allowed to work between two daily rest periods.

For a one-driver job it's all based on a simple 24-hour period. The minimum daily rest is normally 11 hours - then the maximum spreadover is 13 hours.

Should the driver need the option of reducing the rest to nine hours, then the spreadover must not exceed 15 hours. Take the option of a split rest and your driver can only do 12 hours work in a period of 16 hours, because there must be an eight-hour rest. This leaves 16 hours - of which, four must be rest to make up the necessary 12 hours.

John Dickenson is charged with the responsibility of checking tachographs for Voyager International, of Selby.

Like any operator, Voyager takes a hard line on tachograph indiscretions. Drivers are warned verbally, then in writing, then on the third occasion they are sacked.

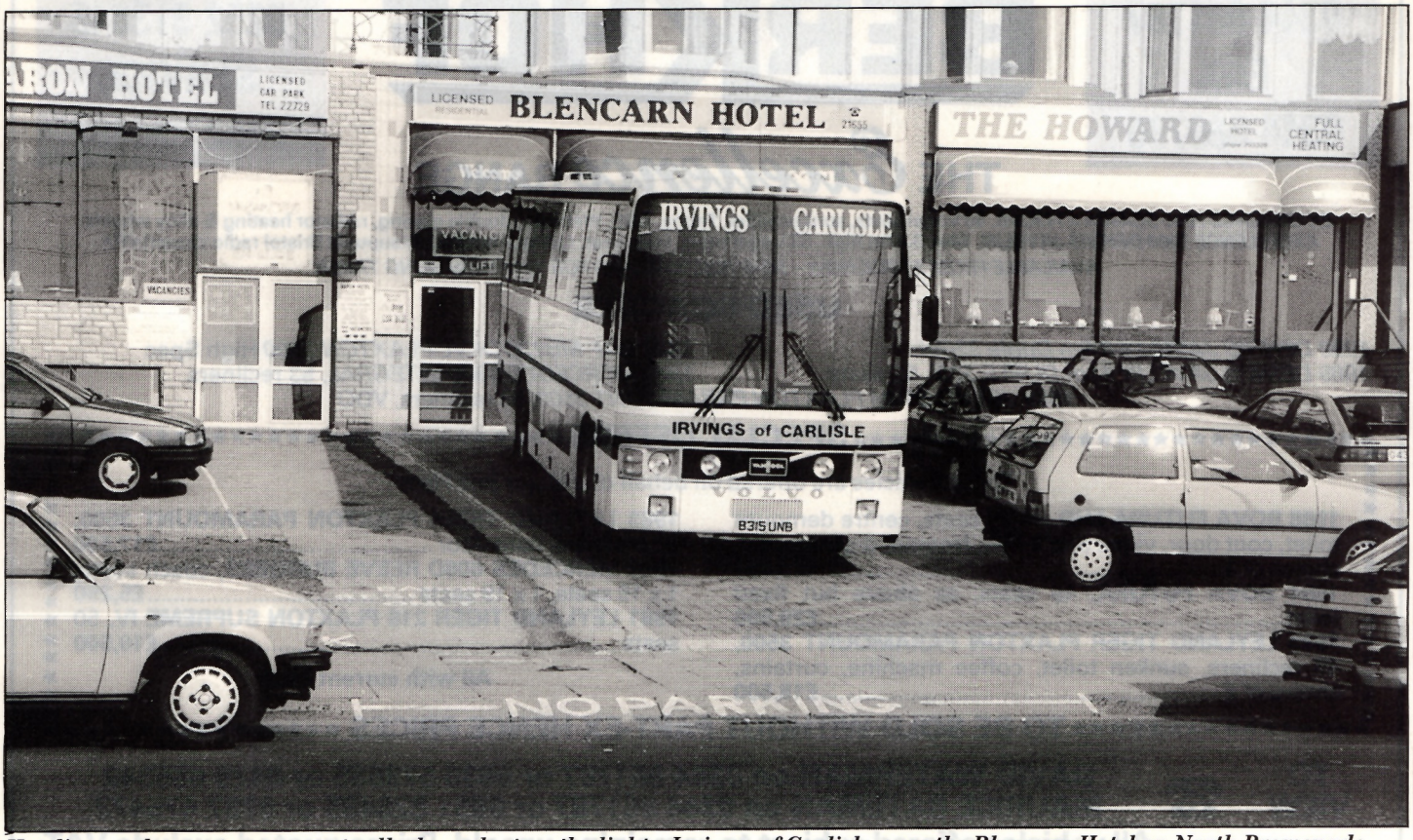
Mr Dickenson sees the 16-hour duty as an aid to day trips to two destinations. Consequently, Voyager can schedule a trip to Scarborough and Whitby with two hours in both towns before returning to base where the driver has his remaining eight hours. Operators are granted savings by not needing to double-man.

***Coachmart* columnist Marksman alerted operators to the flexibility built into the drivers' hours regs.**

With two drivers, of course, the spreadover period is stretched to 22 hours and the minimum daily rest is eight hours in any 30-hour period.

Where the job is unpredictable, such as doing a Blackpool, Mr Dickenson sticks to a simple rule.

'You can spend as long as they like in Blackpool, but if you've had nine hours off, then start a brand new day.' However, he cautioned: 'A new day means a new card.'



Hoteliers and operators are mutually dependent on the lights. Irvings, of Carlisle, uses the Blencarn Hotel on North Promenade.

Bob Atkinson, managing director of Atkinsons near Northallerton, says: 'Blackpool is a headache no matter how you do it. It's always been a problem ever since I was a lad.

'Mind you they've been doing better this year, doing it in an hour or less. Every one we've done during the week we've done the wrong way instead of going south to north.'

Atkinsons reports reduced trade this year. Illuminations trips are down to 11 compared with 30 percent more in 1990.

Harry Shaw, of Coventry, reports a similar trend. General manager, John Shaw, says: 'Blackpool has died this year. We've been doing four trips a week, but loadings are down from 52 to 36. They still run, but it affects profit.'

Mr Shaw puts this down to recession rather than a drop in Blackpool's appeal. 'With 5,000 redundancies in the city in three months it's got to have an effect.'

Further north the magnetism of the Golden Mile still fills seats. Irvings, of Carlisle, has a core of Blackpool holiday and excursion trade which has always done well.

Irvings' tours use the Blencarn Hotel on North Promenade where joint owner, hotelier Steve Price, is grateful for the coach trade which has protected the business from the effects of economic hardships.

He said: 'Away from coaching there's been a significant shift from week holidays to weekends. We take week tours up to the lights, then it's weekends during the lights.'

Mr Price agrees that during this year of job cuts and redundancies the coach trade helped save the day.

He said: 'Our link with coaching is worthwhile. The hotel is geared up to the coach trade and we work in partnership with the operators.'

Despite the drivers' hours headaches during the illuminations and the ravishes of recession, coach operators and the Blackpool hotel trade remain mutually dependent.

Blackpool needs the coach business every bit as much as the coach operator needs Blackpool.

Operators who are not from the Blackpool area face the nightmare of keeping trips legal.

REGULATIONS

12 What is the definition of 'Working Days' and 'Weeks'?

Days
Under domestic and AETR Rules 'days' are any periods of 24 hours but under EC rules 'days' are successive periods of 24 hours beginning with the resumption of driving after the last weekly rest period.

Weeks
Under AETR rules 'weeks' are any periods of 7 days but under EC and Domestic rules they are periods between 00-00 hours on Monday and 24-00 hours on Sunday.

13 What are the rules on daily rest periods?

A driver must have a minimum daily rest of 11 consecutive hours. This may be reduced to 9 hours not more than 3 times a week, as long as the reduction is compensated by an equivalent rest before the end of the following week.

Alternatively, 12 hours daily rest may be taken in two of three periods, one of which must be at least 8 hours, and all of which must be at least one hour.

The daily rest period may be taken in a vehicle, as long as it is fitted with a bunk and is stationary.

Question 16 explains the rules for catching up on reduced rest.

14 What is spread-over and how does it affect me?

'Spreadover' is not a term used in the EC Regulations and is here taken to mean a period of time within which a driver is allowed to work between 2 daily rest periods.

Here are some possibilities:

No. of crew	Minimum daily rest period (see Q.13)	Spreadover
1 Driver	(i) 11 consecutive hours which can be reduced to 9 hours 3 times a week with compensation before the end of the following week	13 hour - or up to 15 hours 3 times a week
	(ii) 8 consecutive hours when taken as one of 2 or 3 separate periods (a minimum of 1 hour) totalling 12 hours of rest in any 24 hour period	12 hours work in a period of up to 16 hours
2 or more	8 consecutive hours in any 30 hour period	22 hours

Department of Transport booklet PSDV 375: clarifies the effect of EC regulations on spreadover.

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Weekly report on law and the coach operator by Michael Jewell

Traffic official slams police following bus driver attack

THE police have been criticised by the West Midland deputy traffic commissioner, Roger Seymour, for an apparent failure to take action following a serious incident involving a Midland Red (West) bus driver.

Mr Seymour had been considering whether Marsud-Ur-Rehman was fit to continue to hold a PSV driving licence, following complaints that he had attacked a passenger with an iron bar and used offensive and abusive language in front of passengers.

Rickie Knight said that on July 12 he had boarded a Midland Red bus in Redditch, driven by Mr Rehman. As he got on, Mr Rehman passed a derogatory comment about his mother, which he ignored. When he came to get off the bus, Mr Rehman called him someone who had a penchant for sexual self abuse and told him to shut his mouth. He turned round and saw Mr Rehman holding a metal bar. They started arguing and Mr Rehman said he would hit him with it.

Mr Knight said: 'I said 'if you are going to use it, use it,' and he did, catching me on top of my head, making it bleed.' Mr Rehman kept trying to hit him and he put his hands up to protect his face and then started to hit Mr Rehman back.

Mr Knight claimed that he needed several stitches in his injuries, that his left jaw was fractured, and that his hand and two fingers were broken.

He said a group of lads he used to knock around with had given Mr Rehman a lot of aggro. His mother had had problems with Mr Rehman in the past and had complained to Midland Red. He denied he was the centre of a group conducting a vendetta and a reign of terror against Mr Rehman.

The deputy commissioner was told of a statement by another passenger, saying that he had seen a youth throw a can of beer at the driver and start punching him, shouting racial abuse.

Midland Red (West): allegations against one of its drivers.

Mr Rehman said he had not said anything to Mr Knight when he boarded the bus. Mr Knight had stood by him and shouted: 'Who is going to save you today you Paki bastard? I'm going to get you.' He told Mr Knight to go away but he started hitting him continuously. He saw him put his hand in his back pocket and thought he was going for a knife. He was in fear of his life and he hit out in desperation with a metal bar that was in the bus cab.

Questioned by Mr Seymour, Mr Rehman said the police had said they would arrest his assailant but unfortunately he had been given the wrong name. He had heard nothing further from the police.

Richard Powers said he had seen Mr Rehman being abused on a number of occasions when travelling on his bus. Mr Knight was one of the instigators and leaders of a racialist clique in the Matchborough Centre.

Idris Jones, Midland Red's Redditch depot manager, said he was aware of the problems Mr Rehman was having, and a number of incidents had been reported to him. On one occasion he and his assistant had travelled on Mr Rehman's bus. When they got to the Matchborough Centre, approximately a dozen youths made rude gestures, shouted abusive remarks and threw a stone at the bus. It was quite a frightening experience. He was sure Mr Rehman would not have made an unprovoked attack on a passenger.

Mr Seymour said he was not satisfied that Mr Knight had been abused or attacked, except in self defence. Mr Rehman had been the subject of persistent and virulent racial abuse in the Matchborough area. He hoped the public inquiry would draw attention to the problem. People who served the public, like bus drivers, nurses and postmen, were entitled to protection and he hoped action would be taken to find the perpetrators.

He said: 'I have to say that I am concerned about the apparent lack of vigour by the police in investigating a very serious incident and the fact that they declined to send an officer to give evidence to help this inquiry today.'

In regard to the second complaint, Joan Gallon said she had boarded a Midland Red bus driven by Mr Rehman. Three youths boarded and then got off. When the bus door closed they pressed the button on the outside, opening it. Mr Rehman swore at them, using obscene language. It was so bad a lady on the bus covered up the ears of a small child. He got off the bus, continuing to swear, threatening to get them. What the boys did was silly, but it was blown out of all proportion through Mr Rehman's totally irrational behaviour.

Mrs Gallon agreed she had had a problem with another Midland Red driver over a bus pass. She said the driver had made an exhibition of her, tearing the pass up in her face. That was over two years ago. She agreed she had written a poem about Midland Red and White Line, which had not been very flattering to Midland Red, accusing it of running late, increasing fares and treating the public like 'Joe Dope'. She admitted she had written a letter of complaint to the local newspaper because Midland Red drivers on occasions drove past her without stopping. She denied that she was prejudiced against Midland Red.

Mr Rehman said the youths had repeatedly called him 'Paki baldy'. They had in fact closed the door, not opened it. He opened it as he thought other people might be waiting to get on, and the youths told him to come on and they would sort him out. They kept calling him 'Paki bastard', 'smelly' and other things. He might have called them 'bastards', but only once. He denied using obscene language. He said that Kingfisher White Buses' drivers encouraged passengers to give Midland Red drivers trouble. He felt he was picked on because of his race, particularly during the Gulf War.

Severely warning Mr Rehman about his future conduct, Mr Seymour said he felt Mrs Gallon was a truthful witness. She was clearly an aggravation to Midland Red, but he was satisfied Mr Rehman over reacted and used an unacceptable degree of bad language.

Weekly report on law and the coach operator by Michael Jewell

Five newcomers win PSV licences

FIVE new entrants to the industry were successful in obtaining PSV operator licences at a Birmingham public inquiry before the West Midland traffic commissioner, John Mervyn Pugh.

They were Kevin Breward, trading as Breward's Travel, of Stoke on Trent, granted a restricted licence for one minibus; Adrian and Annette Copestake, of Uttoxeter, granted a restricted licence for one minibus; West Midlands Special Needs Transport Ltd, trading as Ring and Ride, of Birmingham, granted a national licence for three single deckers; Phillip Lockley, trading as Lockley's Coaches, of Stafford, granted an international licence for one minibus and two single deckers; and Neil and Pat Cunningham, trading as TNC Coaches, of Birmingham, granted an international licence for three single deckers.

Mr Mervyn Pugh said that his duty was summed up as the guardian of public safety. He was there to look after the public.

When they got on a bus, a coach or a minibus, the public assumed without thinking that it was going to be safe and safely driven. That assumption must always be preserved.

Operators' licences were not granted automatically, but only after applicants had been carefully checked out.

The loss of a licence did not only mean devastation to the operator but also devastation to the drivers employed.

Mr Mervyn Pugh told operators he did not want to see them appearing in *Coachmart's* Licensing & Legal column.

Outlining the recommended maintenance system, Mr Mervyn Pugh said traffic area officials were not dictators, but advisers.

He told the five applicants that they would all be invited to a 'New Operators' Seminar,' saying that everybody who had been to such a seminar had not had any problems. That showed the system of education he had adopted was helping the industry.

Coachmart's 'Licensing and Legal' was devoted to operators who got into trouble. It was one of the most avidly read parts of the magazine and he did not want any of them appearing in it.

'It is no use saying the garage let you down,' said Mr Mervyn Pugh, after most had said they were contracting their maintenance out.

'It's your responsibility, so you must ensure the garage know what they are doing,' he said.

Mr Mervyn Pugh told them to forget the MoT certificates on the vehicles that they had bought.

'Take them to the test station and have them tested,' he said. The system only worked if operators started with vehicles in A1 condition. There had even been problems with brand new vehicles and operators would be well advised, even with new vehicles, to have them checked over.

He also suggested that they should consider joining the Bus & Coach Council.

PSV drivers' badges were no longer a requirement, but he recommended that operators keep them, said Mr Mervyn Pugh.

They should design their own to show that the drivers were qualified. It gave the public confidence and the drivers a sense of pride.

After West Midlands Special Needs Transport had said that it had purchased new midibuses and intended to operate registered services, Mr Mervyn Pugh said that though it could register any route it wanted, once it was registered it must run it. The worst offending bus was an early bus.

Fleetline has licence withdrawn

HARROW-based Fleetline Cars has had its six-vehicle PSV operator's licence revoked by the South Eastern and Metropolitan traffic commissioner, Brigadier Michael Turner, at an Eastbourne public inquiry.

In addition, the company has been disqualified from holding or obtaining an O-licence for two years. Evidence was given by a DTp vehicle examiner that five of the company's vehicles had failed their annual test in a period of a month in June and July. A number of the defects found ought to have been picked up during the company's routine preventative maintenance inspections. Some would have been obvious to the drivers.

An immediate prohibition notice had been imposed on a 26-seater coach operated by the company. During a maintenance investigation at Fleetline's premises, it was found that there were no inspection records since 1988.

For Fleetline, it was accepted that the standard of maintenance had been poor and that there had been inadequate supervision. It was said the company had employed a mechanic who turned out to be totally unsatisfactory. The vehicles had been inspected regularly, but the records had been lost during a move of premises. The company had been taken by surprise when the five vehicles failed their tests.

Brigadier Turner said the whole purpose of having a recorded preventative maintenance inspection and a formal system whereby drivers could report defects as they arose was to ensure maintenance staff and managers were kept aware of the fleet condition and could take remedial action when necessary. He felt a company which had totally failed to implement a proper system of maintenance or defect reporting, and which allowed vehicles to be presented for annual test in such a poor condition, could not be said to be meet the requirement to be of good repute.

Fleetline had broken statements of intention that its vehicles would be kept in a fit and serviceable condition; that there would be a proper defect reporting system and that maintenance records would be kept for 15 months and produced on demand. That was despite having had a clear warning letter in 1989, reminding the company of those statements of intention, and drawing attention to vehicle failures during a fleet inspection.

Brigadier Turner said he did not think Fleetline, which was involved in a number of school bus contracts, was fit to continue operating PSVs. He refused to delay the implementation of his decision, pending an appeal to the transport tribunal.

Poor maintenance leads to revocation

MELROSE Coaches, of Ashford, Kent,has had its six-vehicle PSV operator's licence revoked on grounds of poor maintenance, by the South Eastern and Metropolitan traffic commissioner, Brigadier Michael Turner, at an Eastbourne public inquiry.

The firm had previously appeared at disciplinary proceedings in November 1989, when both the duration and the vehicle authorisation was reduced, following an adverse maintenance report.

DTp vehicle examiner, Dennis Lockley, said that two of the firm's vehicles had failed their annual test in May and June of this year. As a result, a fleet inspection was carried out. That resulted in prohibitions being imposed on three further vehicles.

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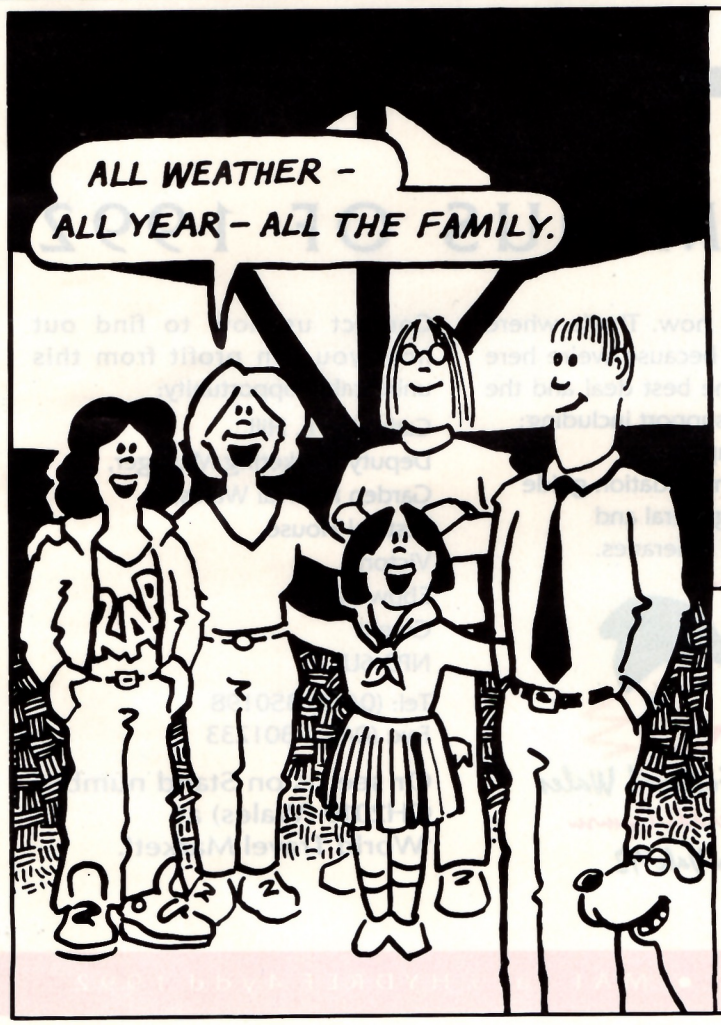

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Olau set for Spring growth with Floriade

Ferry company predicts record numbers of coaches in 1992

OLAU Line is expecting Floriade - the once in a decade world horticultural exhibition in Holland - to boost coach bookings to record levels next year.

The company, which runs a two-ferry service between Sheerness in Kent and the port of Vlissingen in southern Holland, is confidently forecasting that it will beat last year's total of 4,660 coaches by as much as 15 percent and group sales manager, Ian Sheridan, admits that the volume of inquiries for next year is causing a few headaches.

'It's a challenge we welcome - even though the pressure is going to be rather different to that of our usual late Spring rush during the Dutch bulbfield season. Floriade runs from April to October which will spread traffic over a longer period, yet we are already over subscribed for Easter and later Bank Holiday weekends.

'There is availability midweek and at some weekends, but it is quickly being snapped up by coach operators and wholesalers,' he added. Olau says it is geared up for the boom and group rates for next year have been published and show just a small increase on this year.

Despite the tremendous potential for inclusive coach-based Floriade packages, Olau is sticking with a very definite policy of leaving that area to the experts. Mr Sheridan said: 'Wholesalers and tour operators provide us with a good business base and unlike some ferry companies we do not want to cut across them. Our role is running ferries.'

Olau operates twice-daily Dutch connections with its eight-and-a-half hour night crossings in each direction particularly popular for coach groups.

It is the sole operator between the two ports.

Olau: Hollandia and Brittania could be full this summer

Greatdays hits annual Norway target in two months

TOUR wholesaler Greatdays has reached its 1992 target for bookings to Norway within two months of offering the programme.

'It really took us by surprise,' said contracts manager, Bill Headley. 'The programme which we put together with Color Line really has been a runaway success, thanks to the more imaginative operators.'

Virtually every bed night in breaks costing between £199 and £499 was sold by early this month, leaving Greatdays having to find more hotels in Scandinavia.

'And I don't think operators will have any trouble putting bums on seats. Most will have already gauged demand with their regulars, and it seems everyone is looking for something different,' Mr Headley told *Coachmart*.

Greatdays is already looking at new destinations for 1993, though it reports the troubles in Yugoslavia have had a knock-on effect on customer bookings in neighbouring countries.

Hoverspeed's new ship to take over at Folkestone

SEALINK Stena's departure from Folkestone will be marked by the arrival of the third of Hoverspeed's catamaran wave-piercers, the Boulogne.

Shepway District Council has already praised the decision by Sea Containers-owned Hoverspeed to send its third Australian-built passenger ferry to Folkestone.

"It is a happy day for this town and the district of Shepway,' said director of marketing, Stephen Norcliffe.

He said the council has worked closely with Hoverspeed to get the deal, which cements 'a very special relationship.' Sea Containers vice president of ferries, Michael Aiken, said there had been 'support' for the plans from Boulogne Chamber of Commerce, and Shepway and Kent councils.

According to Sea Containers, the port had catered for 1.3 million passengers and 150,000 cars in the last year: 'Hoverspeed will retain much of this volume by offering crossings in half the time, at the same fares applied by the other ferry operator (P&O) on the route from Dover to Boulogne.'

The Hoverspeed sister ships, Great Britain, France and Boulogne, are all built in Hobart, Australia.

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THE Forte Post House Hotel at Thornaby-on-Tees serves the best breakfast in the north-east... and it's official!

Tees Valley Tourism sent out a mystery breakfast eater to taste the traditional fry-ups of cafes, restaurants and hotels in the area.

He shortlisted a dozen, but the Forte Post House took top honours with a £5.95 meal with unlimited coffee.

Pictured is former Dr Who, actor Colin Baker, presenting a bottle of bubbly to general manager Joe Longmuir, while Tees Valley Tourism's Don Waterman (third from right) looks on.

Gates open at bus depot as Notts' coach park closes

NOTTINGHAM'S Wilford Street Coach Park closed last Friday for urgent building work and alternative parking is being provided at Nottingham City Transport's Lower Parliament Street depot.

Charges of £3 for all-day parking, £5 for overnight and £8 for 24 hours are being made by council-owned NCT, and pre-booking for overnight stays is recommended.

There are some benefits in using the depot, though. Toilet drop, bus wash and re-fuelling is available, together with an extensive canteen for which coach drivers will be given a 50p voucher. Refunds of the full parking fee will be given by attractions The Tales of Robin Hood and the Lace Hall, providing the coach books a visit.

Long-term plans are for a permanent coach park to be provided in early 1992.

The West weathers 1991 holiday storm

THE WEST Country has weathered the storm of recession better than many areas, says a survey from the West Country Tourist Board.

Hotels and guest houses suffered the worst this season, with fewer than half the establishments in the survey achieving 1990's results. But 71 percent of self-catering accommodation saw an improvement, and 64 percent of attractions reported similar or more business.

'These figures show the basic resilience of West Country tourism even when the going gets tough,' said WCTB director, Ron Morrison Smith. 'Economic forecasts are far from encouraging and we will have to fight harder than ever before, with aggressive marketing, keen pricing and first-class standards.'

Third driver guide targets Belgium

BATH-based Stephen Rodgers Marketing has produced its third coach operator's regional guide - the Coach Tour Operator's Guide to Belgium.

The 68-page book, distributed free to 4,000 operators, details major Belgian tourist towns, their culture, language, food, beer and coach parking facilities. The Belgian Tourist Office has contributed a major part of the guide, and it is sound advice.

'Of course there are already sales guides produced by the tourist offices,' said Stephen Rodgers. 'But I felt there was need for a more pro-active viewpoint, which highlighted the potential of these destinations.'

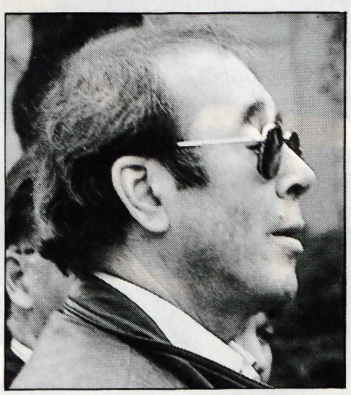
Copies are available from SRM, on 0225 442370, Fax: 0225 444074.

Groupways goes for 'new Germany'

GROUPWAYS Leisure is selling packages into Bavaria at under £200 for seven nights half board including ferries.

The wholesale deals, which use the Hotel Am Sportpark (detailed in the two-part feature on Germany which starts this week) are based on a short sea crossing from Dover to Calais. But Groupways boss, Gerry Topiol, says any sale made to an operator would be tailored to needs.

'So many operators are still in the "pile 'em high and sell 'em cheap" market, with Rhine and Moselle tours. Of course, there is nothing wrong with either destination, or selling what you know is popular, but I am very interested in opening up new destinations and themes,' said Mr Topiol.



Topiol: Looking for new tours.

'We know Germany very well. In fact, we sell more bed nights there than to any other country. It is a vast country with almost unlimited potential at existing destinations. Our educational visit hoped to show a different Germany from the one which most coach tours see.'

In particular, Mr Topiol is convinced there is good potential for the health market, particularly in view of the average age of most coach tour clients. A seven-night, eight-day tour based at Bad Soden half-board would work out at around £300, including spa facilities and ferries, he said.

'It's a £400-plus product,' he said. 'And as a specialist market, it won't suffer from price undermining by other operators.'

Other special interest packages could include wines, glass-making, pottery... almost any theme: 'I'm always interested in new ideas, and will do everything I can to make them a complete success,' he told *Coachmart*.

Groupways Leisure is on 0494 792722, Fax: 0494 792723.

Turn to page 35 for part one of a fact-finding feature on Germany

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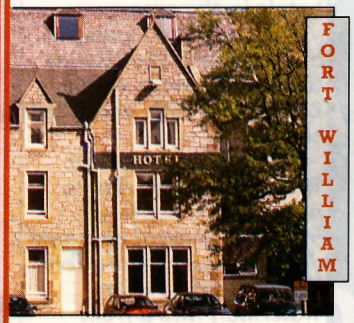

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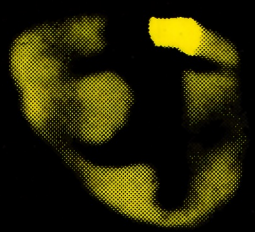

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Germany beckons UK coach operators

Tourism editor, Mark Williams, spotlights the delights of Germany in the first of a two-part *Coachmart* feature.

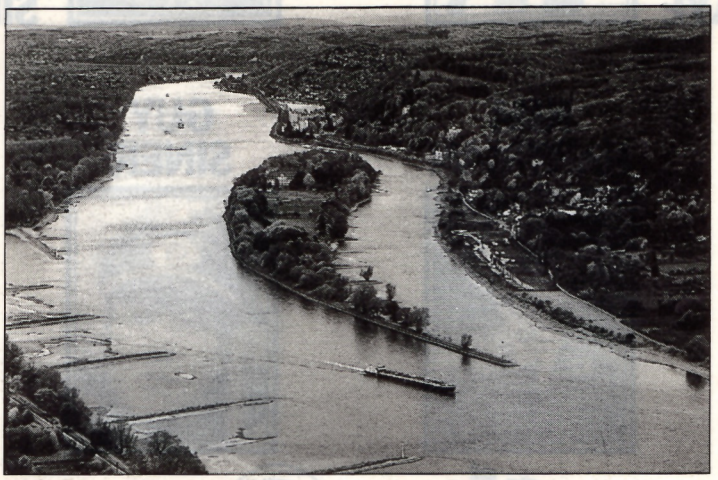
SHORT of golden seasides and sunshine, Germany can offer the operator and his clients virtually everything they want from a tour.

The hotels are good, the scenery outstanding - particularly in Bavaria - and the culture not worlds removed from our own. Personnel in German tourism generally speak English, so the language barrier faced by mono-lingual Britons does not exist.

As Britain glides inexorably towards the European mainland, price differentials are becoming minimal. Overall, the tourist can believe he, or she, is in a particularly user-friendly environment, exotic but not alarming.

Most things in Germany run like clockwork, as you would expect. Other aspects of German culture are less predictable.

Proud of its burgeoning education system, Germany markets it even to tourists. And with universities which boast upwards of 50,000 students, the statistics are a surprise. Many regions are now so well-known they warrant only a small mention. Rhineland is the standard area which gets the bookings. Close to the border and with an excellent tourism structure, it offers low costs and a carefully-tailored package which the operator can rely upon to provide him with sales.



Rhineland: one of the many attractions of Germany.

But away from the Rhineland towns and cities, there's a great deal more on offer.

The trip, organised by Groupways, took us deep into Bavaria, where mountains are held apart by Christmas-card hamlets dotted around green valleys.

Cities like Regensburg demonstrate the historic wealth and piousness of German history, with cathedrals and merchants' houses which completely dominate the small streets. Every yard of space has been used with the renowned German efficiency.

Any tourist who has encountered the appalling standard and poor variety of food and drink on the average Mediterranean package deal has a treat in store in Germany. Germans eat in a similar way to ourselves - good food and plenty of it. It's a highly relevant sales pitch for any German tour.

You've got to enjoy eating pork and sausages, and drinking beer and wine, to really enjoy Germany. And all four commodities probably double-up as the best souvenirs.

Good quality clothing commands high prices. The markets are like all markets, great value and considerably more interesting than the average department store.

Germany is a country with great depth. The potential for special interest breaks, especially to health spas, is enormous and virtually unexplored by UK coach operators.

German coaches trundle in and out of Baden Baden, Bad Soden, and the like, all summer with coachloads of arthritic or asthmatic men and women. It is unfathomable that no UK operator has yet followed the lead, but inevitable that the first to do so will open a new and profitable niche market.

Hunting, shooting and fishing may be another market which UK operators could explore. There are ski resorts which may welcome the business.

Above all, it would certainly pay to explore new towns and cities. The only problem with Rhineland breaks is that the price can be directly compared with the neighbouring company's brochure. Dare to be different.

You can bank on Frankfurt for those vital statistics!

FRANKFURT ranks as one of Europe's most impressive cities, with vital statistics which reflect its status as Germany's banking capital.

There are a mere 0.63 million residents yet these host 1.9 million visitors every year.

Frankfurt has everything - 1,300 bars, the biggest rail station in Europe, handling 250,000 passengers a day, and an airport at which a plane leaves on average once every minute.

The city is one of few in Europe which can boast genuine skyscrapers, most of which house banks.

They typify the newness of much of Frankfurt - almost completely destroyed by blanket bombing in the war.

The tragic loss of most of the old city, with its wood-framed houses, led to a massive rebuilding programme.

Frankfurt retains only a tiny amount of its original character but is a cultural centre for everything from ballet, through opera to museums.

The wealth of the residents is reflected in the grandeur of the buildings.

A huge amount of information is available from the tourist office.

Corporate clients looking for European exhibition venues or conference centres need look no further than Frankfurt.

The tourist office will make all the arrangements, including the funding of site inspections.

Frankfurt Tourism. Tel: 010 49 69 212 34137/ 38551/ 38156/ 30398/ 38701/ 36869. Fax: 30776.

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Aachen is worth more than just a cursory glance...

AACHEN, on the German border, is well-known to operators but deserves more recognition as a destination rather than a road junction.

We stayed overnight in the Hotel Arcade - an adequate rather than luxurious hotel direct from the Arcade group mould. Slightly out of the main city, it was nonetheless close enough to be just a 15-minute walk from the major attractions. Coach parking is not available at the hotel.

The centre-pieces of Aachen's attractions are the 8th Century palace, town hall and cathedral. All three historic buildings have been damaged and restored in successive upheavals, the last being World War II. Fortunately, a substantial amount of original masonry and the basic structure of many of the more dramatic towers, remains intact.

History buffs will enjoy all three attractions, in the heart of what remains of the old city. Many relics of ruler Charlemagne, who chose Aachen as his home, are exhibited. Museums abound, the biggest being the new Ludwig art museum.

For less specialised groups, there are lots of hot springs and spas. Sanatoriums are very popular with German people and others, who claim rheumatic disorders and breathing difficulties can be relieved by the water - which has a rotten eggs' smell characteristic of hydrogen sulphide - and its vapours.

Continues on page 38...

This Aachen 'monster' is said to guard the town's menfolk from straying into the 'Red-light' district.

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- Meet sharks, catfish and colourful lobsters eye to eye at the **Sealife Centre.**
- Discover, at the **D-Day Museum** how the Allied invasion of Europe took place.
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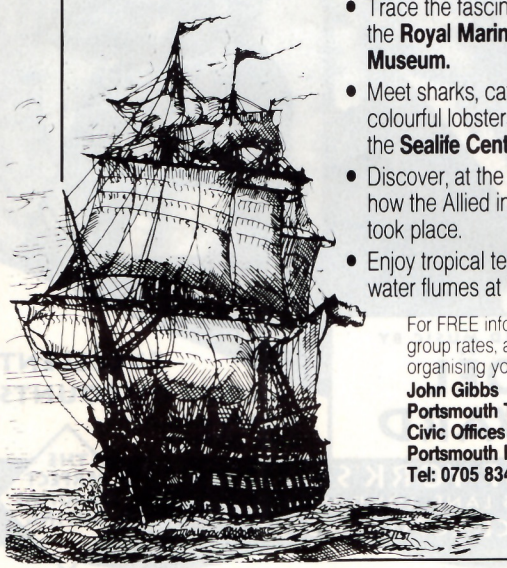

For FREE information, details of group rates, and assistance in organising your tour contact:
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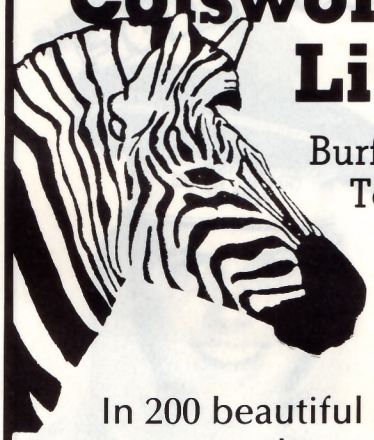
Portsmouth Tourism (CO)
Civic Offices
Portsmouth PO1 2BG
Tel: 0705 834086

Cotswold Wild Life Park



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... it's a surprisingly interesting coach destination

... From page 37

Spa cures are big business in Germany.

Aachen has plenty of bars, restaurants and coffee shops, a casino, and other diversions.

A more cultural evening can be spent in one of Aachen's two theatres, or on a walking or bus tour organised by the local tourist office.

Shopping in Aachen - which has largely been rebuilt with flat-roofed modern buildings - is not cheap but some very unusual gifts are available.

The local speciality is a ginger biscuit called 'printen' which is strictly for dunking... it's rock hard and virtually indestructible!

Many are stamped ('printen') with scenes of the old city and guides assured us they would last for a couple of decades and still be edible.

There are two main coach parks in the city, and set-down points close to the major attractions. A map is available from the tourist office. We saw one other hotel during our visit - the 100-room Aquis Grana City Hotel. Luxurious and in the city's centre - a stone's throw from the red-light area - prices reflect this.

However, it would be superb for the upmarket group, notwithstanding its lack of coach parking.

Aachen Tourist Office, Tel: 010 49 241 1 80 2950/Fax 2930. Hotel Arcade, Tel:010 49 241 5 1840. Aquis Grana City Hotel, Tel: 010 49 241 4430.

Hessenpark is preserving the past for tomorrow's visitors

HOW do you preserve a heritage of old buildings scattered over hundreds of square miles and show them to the public?

The Hessenpark open-air museum was Bavaria's answer - a museum in which houses, farms and churches painstakingly taken apart have been rebuilt into an entire village.

The project, at Neu Anspach about two hours from Regensburg, is huge and impressive.

It has all the trappings of country life, including old breeds of farm animals, a water-powered forge, charcoal burning and bread making.

The intention is to help the visitor 'live' the experience.

Hessenpark open-air museum is a must for groups in the Frankfurt area.

It is open from March 21 until mid-November with discounted group entry and guided tours at low cost.

Hessenpark Open-Air Museum (group arrangements), Tel: 010 49 6081 5880.

Don't miss next week's *Coachmart* and go deep into the heart of Bavaria

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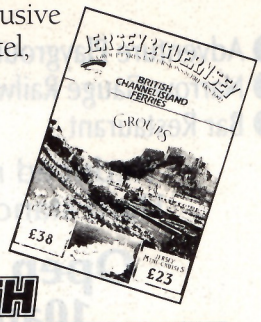

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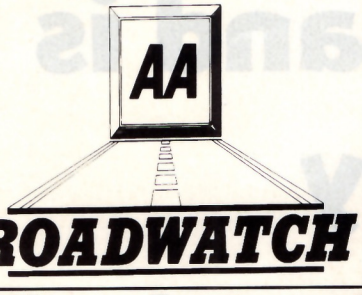


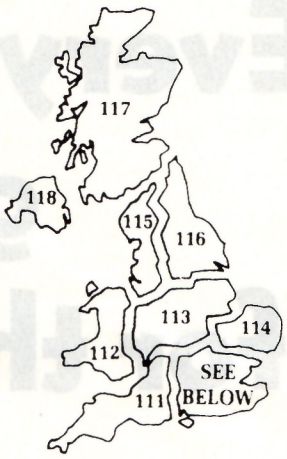
This Roadwatch report was compiled by *Coachmart* with the help of the AA. If there are other points of information you need, write to Roadwatch PSV, *Coachmart*, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough, PE1 1DS.

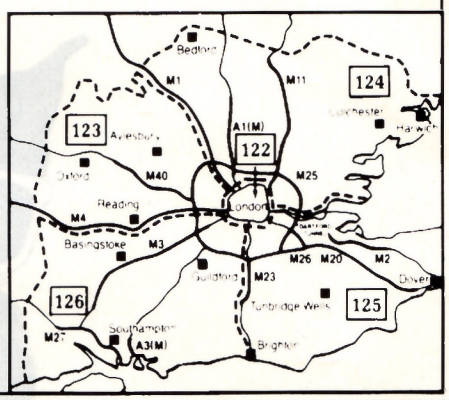
The latest diesel prices in Europe

EUROPEAN diesel prices as at November 14 (in £Sterling, per gallon. Conversion to litres, x 4.546).

Austria	**£1.91**
Belgium	**£1.93**
Denmark	**£1.94**
Finland	**£2.10**
France	**£1.68**
Germany	**£1.80**
Greece	**£0.93**
Irish Rep.	**£2.44**
Italy	**£2.35**
Luxembourg	**£1.17**
Netherlands	**£1.72**
Norway	**£1.44**
Portugal	**£1.82**
Spain	**£1.77**
Sweden	**£2.53**
Switzerland	**£1.88**
Yugoslavia	**£2.97**

For the latest information, call AA Roadwatch on 0836 401, followed by:
110 for motorways across Britain
127 for M25
118 for Northern Ireland
117 for Scotland
116 for north-east England
115 for north-west England
114 for East Anglia
113 for Midlands
112 for Wales
111 for West Country
The south-east of England is divided up as follows:
126 for area between M4 and M23
125 for area between M23 and Dartford Tunnel
124 for area between Dartford Tunnel and M1
123 for north-west Home Counties
122 for Central London
(See map, right, UK troublespots, below)
Calls are charged at 36p per minute off peak and 48p at other times.





LONDON AND SOUTH EAST

M1 **Hertfordshire: Contraflow at J3 (A41, near Watford).**
M20 **Kent: Contraflow between J5 and J8 (Maidstone West/ Hollingbourne).**
M20 **Kent: Closures between J10 and J11 (Ashford/Hythe).**
M26 **Kent: Contraflow between the M25 and M20 interchanges.**
M23 **Sussex: Contraflow between J9-J10 (Gatwick/Crawley).**
M25 **Surrey: Contraflow between J13 and J14 (Staines/Heathrow)**
A40M **London: Lane closures both ways on Westway, White City.**
A406 **London: Contraflow on North Circular road between Staples Corner and Neasden Underpass.**
A27 **Sussex: Contraflow on the Shoreham flyover.**
A1 **Bedfordshire: Contraflow at the Black Cat roundabout, south of Tempsford.**
A2 **Kent: Restrictions on London Road, Sittingbourne.**

MIDLANDS AND EAST ANGLIA

M1 **Leicestershire: Contraflow between J21 and J22 (near Leicester).**
M6 **West Midlands: Contraflow between J7 and J9 (Gt Barr/ Wednesbury).**
The northbound entry slip road is closed at J7.
M6 **Staffordshire: Contraflow between J13 and J14 (A449/ Stafford).**
M5 **Hereford/Worcester: Southbound entry and exit slip roads closed at J6 (Worcester North).**
Diversions *M50* Hereford/Worcester: Contraflow at J3 (Jays Green).
A38 **Hereford/Worcester: Southbound diversions on Barbourne Road, Worcester.**
A4540 **West Midlands: Restrictions at Hockley (Birmingham).**
A6 **Leicestershire. Restrictions at Market Harborough**
A47 **Cambridgeshire: Resurfacing work between Station Road and Pidgeon's Farm, Thorney.**
A11 **Norfolk: Contraflow between Norwich and Wymondham.**
A45 **Suffolk: Contraflow at Felixstowe.**

WALES AND WEST

M5 **Devon: One lane closed southbound 8am - 7pm between J27-28 (Tiverton/Cullompton).**
M5 **Somerset: Contraflow J24-J25 (Bridgewater/Taunton).**
M4 **West Glamorgan: Restrictions both ways J39-J41 (Groes/Pentyla).**
M4 **Gwent: Various lane closures both ways J22-J28 (Chepstow/ Tredegar Park).**
M5 **Gloucestershire: Contraflow J11-J12 (Near Gloucester).**
A485 **Dyfed: Temporary lights at Tregaron.**

Motorway & 'A' roadworks

For the week November 25 - December 2

A48 **West Glamorgan: Contraflow between Llandarcy and Lonlas.**
A4080 **Gwynedd: Temporary lights on Menai Suspension Bridge.**
A35 **Dorset: Two sets of temporary lights between Dorchester and Puddletown.**
A4 **Avon: Restrictions on Hotwell Road, Bristol.**
A358 **Somerset: Temporary traffic lights south of Taunton Ashill.**

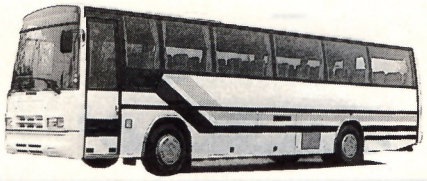
NORTH

M56 **Greater Manchester: Restrictions on the airport link road.**
M56 **Cheshire: Contraflow J10-J12 (Stretton/Clifton).**
M66 **Greater Manchester: Lane restrictions both ways between J1 and J3 (Ramsbottom/Pilsworth).**
M55 **Lancashire: Reduced to one lane both ways between junctions 3 and 4 (Wesham/Marton).**
M65 **Lancashire: Eastbound carriageway closed overnight between junctions 10 and 12. Diversions via the A679 and A682.**
M62 **Humberside: Contraflow J34-J35 (Whitley Bridge/Langham).**
M6 **Cumbria: Contraflow between J40 and J42 (Clifton/Carlisle).**
A1(M) **County Durham: Contraflow at Chester-le-Street.**
M18 **South Yorkshire: Contraflow near J2 (Wadworth).**
M18 **South Yorkshire: Contraflow between J4 and J5 (Doncaster).**
M1 **South Yorkshire: Lane closures both ways between junctions 35 and 35A (Rotherham/Tankersley).**
M1 **West Yorkshire: Contraflow between junctions 41 and 43 (Wakefield/Stourton), northbound entry slip at J41 closed.**
A59 **Lancashire: Contraflow between Penwortham and Hutton.**
Al **Northumberland: Contraflow with temporary lights at southern end of Alnwick Bypass.**
A59 **North Yorkshire: Temporary lights on Harrogate to Skipton road.**
A630 **South Yorkshire: Balby, Doncaster roadworks on Warmsworth Road at the junction of Anelay Road, Ranyard Road, Hepworth Road and Kipley Avenue.**
A1079 **Humberside: Beverley Bypass closed southbound at the Killingwold Graves roundabout.**
A6 **Lancashire: Bolton-le-Sands: resurfacing work on bypass road.**

SCOTLAND

M74 **Strathclyde: Various lane closures at J6 (Hamilton).**
M8 **Strathclyde: Contraflow between J5-J6 (Shotts/Newhouse).**
A74 **Dumfries/Galloway: Contraflow south of the Guardsmill interchange near Gretna**
A952 **Grampian: Temporary traffic lights near St Fergus affecting traffic between Peterhead and Fraserburgh.**
A74 **Strathclyde: Various lane closures at Elvanfoot.**

COACHES WELCOME



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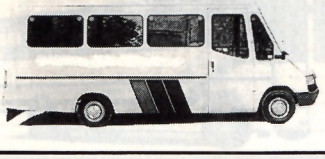

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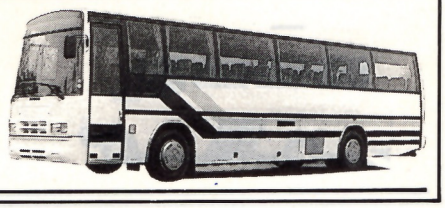

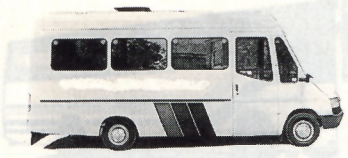

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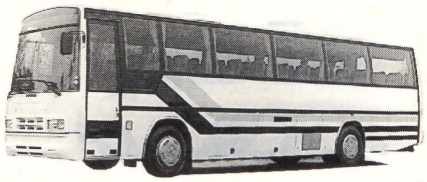

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In this old Victorian town of Llandudno and sitting at the base of the famous Great Orme this south facing hotel has all the makings of a happy friendly holiday.
★ 32 bedrooms all en suite ★ Excellent cuisine ★ Comfort ★ Entertainment
All this with spectacular views and only 3 minutes from all amenities.
Availability for Christmas & New Year programme. Also taking bookings for next year.

For further details **Tel. (0492) 876277** MERIT

(22879/CWL)

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AA ★★ Cedars Hotel

Friendly family run hotel with spectacular views overlooking Newquay bay, close to town and beaches with 42 bedrooms – 35 en suite.

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For further details
Lorraine Jones (0637) 874225

(22431/CWL)

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Family run hotel renowned for its high standard of service and warm friendly atmosphere
NEW YEAR!
Special package. 3 nights full entertainment programme inc New Year's Eve party! + full carvery
★ Indoor pool ★ Sauna ★ Spa pool ★ Solarium
All rooms en suite, colour TV, tea/coffee making, lift, CH, coach parking – driver free!
£125 pp inc dinner, B/B (+ one lunch)
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(22807/CWL)

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COACH OPERATORS...

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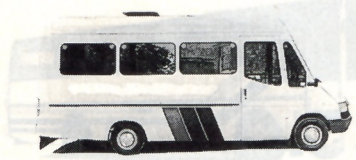

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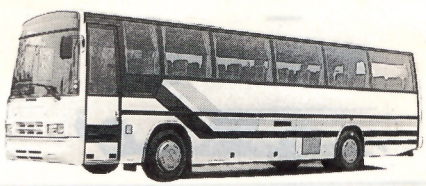

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BARGAIN BUSES

BARGAIN BUS

1978 BEDFORD YLQ 500 PLAXTON SUPREME

45 seater, nice condition, very reliable, MoT March '92, taxed.

£4,000 ono + VAT

Tel. (0939) 260269

(22752/BAR)

BARGAIN BUS

BEDFORD PJK

29 seater, Plaxton, manual door, R Reg, 1 year's MoT, **£3,600.**

FORD TRANSIT

16 high back seats, V Reg, May '92 MoT, **£3,250**

Tel. (0292) 591252 Scotland

(22848/BAR)

AEC

1960 HARRINGTON CAVALIER AEC 505

Ex-Neath and Cardiff Express, still in original livery, very clean, 41 seats, class one, MoT August 1992.

£3,000 + VAT

Tel. (0656) 740262

(22903/AEC)

AEC 1978, 760 Plaxton, semi automatic, 53 seats, Bristol dome, express doors, radio cassette, excellent condition, MoT September 1992. **£5,000 + VAT. Tel. 0294 63654.** (22834/AEC)

AEC Reliance Plaxton Supreme, 1977, 53 seats, MoT 8/92, recent engine, **£5,500 + VAT. P Bowran PMT (0782) 744744.** (22857/AEC)

ACRON

VAN HOOL MAN, 1983, excellent condition, TV/video, tea/coffee, toilet, new clutch, 49 seats, any inspection, part exchange considered, **£30,000 + VAT. Tel. (0692) 406020.** (22846/AC)

BEDFORD

BEDFORD COACHES FOR SALE

1982 YNT DUPLE DOMINANT IV, 9,000 miles (approx) on current engine, recent recon ZF 6-speed gearbox, full interior retrim including floor and curtains, well above average condition, at present in Morecambe following tour to Scotland and Cornwall. **£13,000 ono. For THIS coach telephone Mark at Battersby's 0524 410228.**

1981 YNT PLAXTON SUPREME IV EXPRESS, mechanically sound, recent interior retrim, at present in Isle of Man. **Priced at £12,000 ono.** Delivered to Morecambe 22/11/91. **For THIS coach contact Ray or Roy at Tours (Isle of Man) 0624 674301.**

Both coaches finished in white/blue and have Bristol Domes.

(22847/BE)

BEDFORD

EXAMPLE

BEDFORD YMP TURBO

10M Paramount Exec, 1984, 36/38 rec, toilet, water boiler, wired TV, video, d/g, pp/, plug door, engine just rebuilt, MoT 3/92, excellent condition.

£23,900 + VAT ono

Tel. (0905) 772301

Re-advertised due to timewasters

(22813/BE)

1984 BEDFORD YNT Plaxton Paramount

53 seater, usual extras, first class condition, new MoT, inspection invited.

£24,000 + VAT

LARRATT PEPPER AND SONS LTD, Thurnscoe

Tel. Rotherham (0709) 892153

(22413/BE)

FW HARRISON COMM LTD

NOW AVAILABLE

NEW BEDFORD BUSES

27 seat (70 standing), 45 seats (30 standing), automatic and manual gearbox, bodies by Icarus and Duple, with Bedford TM heavy duty chassis, all left hand drive – to suit export market – third saving on new price.

CONTACT PAUL HARRISON

Tel. 0335 43271 Fax. 0335 46393

Holme Farm, Green Lane, Clifton, Ashbourne, Derbyshire DE6 2BL

(22840/BE)

BEDFORD

1978 BEDFORD YMT Plaxton, 53 seater, new MoT, white with red interior, Bristol dome, recent Bedford blue engine, excellent condition, **£4,250 + VAT. 1977 BEDFORD** YMT Duple Dominant II, 53 seater, recent new engine, white with red interior, Telma, **£3,250 + VAT. Tel. Ryans Coaches (0225) 424157.** (22833/BE)

1975 PLAXTON PJK, power door, 12 months test, taxed April 1992, nearly new tyres, retrimmed by Blackpool trim shop, fair condition, well maintained. **£2,500 + VAT. Tel. 0623 861096.** (22866/BED)

BEDFORD YMT PLAXTON SUPREME IV EXPRESS

Grant spec, 53 seaters fitted with Cummins 6 BTA engines.
Choice of 4.
2 first reg Jan 1979,
2 first reg March 1980,
fair condition for year, full maintenance records available.
Prices Circa £6,000/7,000 + VAT
Tel. Peter Meadows on 0827 60011
Bowens, 66 Fazeley Road, Tamworth

(22880/BE)

1979 YMT 500, 53 seats, Plaxton Supreme IV, tinted windows, 2 speed axle, 11 months MoT, good condition, **£6,500 + VAT. 1977** YMT 500, 51 seats, Plaxton Supreme III, **£3,500 + VAT. Taylors Coaches (0462) 813262.**

(22772/BE)

BOVA

2 x 1984 BOVA FUTURA HIGH LINE

49 recliners, centre toilet, continental door, video, Tempo 100, drinks machine, carpets, curtains, excellent condition, with MoT.

£39,500 + VAT each

Tel. 0686 626731

(22850/BO)

BOVA EUROPA, 1982, P/P, 52 recliners, curtains, power door, PA system, 12 months MoT. **£20,000 ono + VAT. Tel. 0484 545241.** (22862/BOV)

BRISTOL

1982 X Bristol LHS Plaxton Supreme V, 31 Lazerini recliners, tinted windows, curtains, repanelled where required this year, tested March 1992, in excellent condition. **£13,750. Tel. 0704 821245.** (22865/BR)

DAF

VAN HOOL 1981, 48 recliners + courier, toilet, radio cassette P/A, hot water, drinks machine, MoT April 1992, p/p very good condition. **£29,000 + VAT. Tel. 031 229 8666.** (22831/DAF)

MAY 1983 DAF MB 200 Van Hool Alizee, 53 recliners plus courier, Webasto, radio/PA/cassette, plug door, speed limiter, together with 4 tables, coffee machine, MoT April 1992, excellent condition. **£33,000. Tel. 0252 624404.** (22824/DAF)

DAF

1989 F REG DAF LAG PANORAMIC

49 recliners, courier, 2 TVs/video cassette, centre toilet, drinks machine, MoT until March 92/July 92.

Choice of 2.

£80,000 each ono + VAT

Tel: 0287 633971

(22775/DAF)

1983 DAF Executive, 44 recliners or 36 + 4 tables, limiter, Telma, double glazed, toilet, bunk, coffee machine, TV and video, MoT 10.4.92, **£30,000 ono. Tel. Howletts (0296) 713201.**

(22760/DAF)

DOUBLE DECKERS

1984 DAF JONCKHEERE P99

CHOICE OF TWO

71 seats, MoT April 1992, retrimmed. All usual extras, recent engine.

VICTORY TOURS

Salisbury, Wiltshire

0725 552247

(22734/DD)

BRISTOL VRT – 74 SEATS

1981 MoT 5/92	**£6,500**
1978 MoT 9/92	**£4,900**
1976 MoT 11/92	**£3,900**
Also available	
1978 without MoT	**£1,900**

All prices plus VAT

Contact P. Bowran

(0782) 744744

Stoke on Trent PMT

(22854/DD)

LEYLAND ATLANTEANS, L & N Reg, 1 year's PSV test, superb condition. LEYLAND LOWLANDERS, 1965/66 manuals, 60 & 71 seaters, tested, offers. **Tel. (0379) 384362, eves (0379) 388366.** (22809/DD)

DUPLE

1987

DUPLE 425

Cummins/ZF automatic, 46 recliners, 3 x TV monitors, wired for video (not supplied), toilet, galley with fridge, water boiler, sink and cupboards, rear continental door.

£40,000 + VAT ono

0202 537568 or 0929 554588

(22893/DU)

FORD

1979 (V REG) FORD R1114 Duple Dominant. 53 reclining seats & courier, air-door, telma, radio/PA, 1st reg 9/79, T&T 4/92, **£4,750 + VAT. Tel. 04024 55666.** (22704/FO)

FORD

FORD PLAXTON SUPREME

1976/77, 45 seater, excellent condition for year, 12 months MoT.

£3,000 + VAT or P/X for 25 seater

Tel. (0364) 42666 or 43870

(22899/FO)

1981 FORD PLAXTON

53 seats, Telma, lockers, radio, PA, cassette, tinted, test 4/92, two owners from new, unlettered, good condition.

~~**£7,500**~~ **£6,995 for quick sale**

Bugler Bristol

(0272) 778759 days

(0272) 779170 eves/wkend

(22892/FO)

IVECO

IVECO 49-10 Reeve Burgess Beaver, 21 seater plus 7 standees, D reg, brown moquette coach seats, low mileage, MoT February 1992. **£12,500. Tel. 0359 40291 part exchange.**

(22868/IVE)

LEYLAND

1976 LEYLAND LEOPARDS

49/53, Duple/Plaxton, current MoTs.

CHOICE OF TWO.

Good condition for the year.

OFFERS PLUS VAT

TYRERS TOURS LTD

(0282) 861234

(22826/LEY)

1983 LEYLAND TIGER

245 H.Y.D. Duple Lazer, 48 recliners & courier, toilet, servery, MoT 25/3/92.

FIRST REASONABLE OFFER

Tel. 0290 61300 office

61647 home

(22778/LE)

1981 LEYLAND LEOPARD Plaxton Supreme 4, 53 seater, engine rebuilt March 1991, seats retrimmed 2 years ago, Webasto heater, power door, 1 year's MoT, inspection welcome. **£14,500 + VAT ono. Tel. Ingleby's, York (0904) 637620.** (22739/LEY)

LEYLAND

1982 TIGER 245 GOLDLINER, D/D, toilet, washroom, servery, 48 recliners, wired for TV and video, radio, PA, wheeltrims, tinted double glazed windows, MoT April '92..... **£19,500 ono**

1982 TIGER 245 PARAMOUNT, 3200, 57 seater, MoT Oct '92, radio, PA, wheeltrims, new centre floor, Telma ..... **£22,000 ono**

Tel. (0942) 45305/43165

WALLS OF WIGAN

(22901/LE)

1976 LEYLAND Plaxton 680, semi auto, power door, MoT 11/92. **£6,000 + VAT. Choice of 2.**

1977 LEYLAND Duple Express CH, 49 seats, 580 semi auto, MoT 11/92. **£5,500 + VAT.**

1979 LEYLAND Plaxton Express CH, MoT 11/92. **Choice of 2. £8,000 + VAT.**

Rennies of Dunfermline

0383 620600

(22827/LEY)

LEYLAND LEOPARD

Plaxton Supreme Paramount front, 53 reclining seats, good condition, new MoT.

Offers around

£6,000 + VAT

Tel. 0222 471614/5

(22838/LEY)

1974 LEYLAND LEOPARD

53 seats, Plaxton Elite, semi auto, power steering, hand brake and door, recent new engine, gearbox and axle, retrimmed seats, MoT 6/11/92.

£3,750 + VAT

Tel. Staffordian Travel

0785 211433

(22844/LEY)

TIGER, Padane bodied, excellent condition, toilet, tea/coffee, 47 seats, engine, gearbox overhauled 1990, TV, ideal first executive. **£18,500 + VAT. Tel. (0692) 406020.** (22845/LEY)

LEOPARD 1978, 49 seats, Grant doors, MoT 1/92, **£4,200 + VAT.** Also **1978** 3 Leopards, no MoT. All for **£4,900 + VAT. P. Bowran PMT (0782) 744744.**

(22853/LE)

1979 (T) Leopard Plaxton body, Grant doors, 50 fixed seats or 46 recliners, MoT Sept 1992, very clean, well maintained, **£8,000 + VAT. Tel. (0208) 872123 Bodmin.** (22765/LE)

1978 LEYLAND LEOPARD, Duple Dominant, 53 seat express coach, tested May 1992. **£3,350 + VAT. Tel. 0254 233163 or 0836 517605.**

(22864/LEY)

MERCEDES

MERCEDES 608D

21 seater, Whittaker conversion, MoT 22/10/92, very good condition.

£11,000 + VAT

Tel. Johnsons Henley Ltd (0564) 794794 day, (0564) 792047 after 6pm

(22890/MER)

1989 DUBRAVA EXECUTIVE MERCEDES V8, 49 recliners plus courier, full length centre continental door, centre toilet and washroom, AM/FM stereo cassette, 2 TVs, video, hot drinks, double glazed, thermostatically controlled heating, Webasto, driver's door, carpet, must be seen. Only 66,000 kms. MoT 6/92. **£48,950 + VAT. Tel. 0942 497436 or 820343.**

(22888/MER)

SCANIA

1989 SCANIA KII3 ELITE

Fully automatic, low mileage, Jonckheere de Ville body with all usual extras. Non-smoking vehicle from new.

£78,000 + VAT

Tel: 0708 764465

(22872/SC)

SCANIA K112 1985

Jonckheere P599, full executive, 51 recliners, toilet and TV, video, continental door, hot drinks, fridge and bunk etc, vgc.

£42,000 ono + VAT

Tel: 0706 368999 or 0831 234433

(22875/SC)

MAN

1985 MAN SR 280 HI-LINE

49 seats, plus courier, private plate, toilet, coffee machine, video, two TVs, continental door, double glazed, centre carpet, ferry lift, Webasto, used on private hire, tours.

Choice of two

£39,000 plus VAT

Tel. 0703 406628

(22836/MAN)

VOLVO

1984 VOLVO B10M

Duple Caribbean, 49 recliners plus courier, toilet fitted, 245,924 kms.

Being sold on behalf of Finance Company

Tel: Matthew on 0480 891642

(22905/VO)

1982 Volvo B10M Bermuda 12m, 53 retrimmed seats, toilet, power door, radio pa, pannier lockers, continental step **£27,950**

1982 Volvo B58 Plaxton 12m, 53 retrimmed seats, refloored, s/auto, power door, radio pa, d/glazed, owned from new **£19,950**

1981 Volvo B58 Plaxton 12m, 57 seats, 6sp ZF, power door, radio pa, repainted white **£17,950**

1980 Volvo B58 Plaxton 12m, 57 retrimmed seats, new floor, semi-auto, radio pa, power door, air/leaf, repainted white **£14,950**

1978 Volvo B58 Plaxton 11m, 53 retrimmed seats, semi-auto, power door, tidy **£9,950**

1976 Volvo B58 Plaxton 11m, 53 retrimmed seats, express doors, semi-auto, tidy **£6,950**

1975 & 76 Volvo Alizee deckers, choice of six, single & double doors, all tidy with long tests **£4,500**

All prices plus VAT

Please telephone, vehicles in daily use

Nottingham 0602 784645

Skills

(22842/VO)

1987 VOLVO B10M

Plaxton Paramount, 4 star, 49 reclining seats, central toilet, water boiler, double glazed, driver's bunk, curtains and carpet, TV and video, splitter gearbox, Telma, alarm fitted, 12 months MoT, excellent condition.

£61,500 + VAT ono

Part exchange considered

Tel. (0532) 822206 or (0924) 375140

(22740/VO)

1980

VOLVO B58 PLAXTON 12M VIEWMASTER

50 reclining seats & courier, air door, telma, tinted windows, radio/PA, underfloor lockers, chassilube, 1st reg 1980, T&T 2/92, very clean vehicle.

£15,000 + VAT

Tel. (04024) 55666

(22703/VO)

1980 B58 SUPREME IV

53 seats, tinted windows, power door, radio, cassette, curtains, MoT April 1992, nice condition.

£15,000 + VAT

FITZCHARLES COACHES LTD

Tel. 0324 482093 (22715/VO)

1987 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500

Full executive, 49 recliners, twin screen video, coffee machine, centre toilet and washroom, mint condition.

OFFERS INVITED

WRAYS of HARROGATE

0423 522466

(22763/VO)

1986 VOLVO B10M GL

VAN HOOL ALIZEE DH

49 recliners, video/TV, toilet, servery, etc. Pristine condition

£52,500 + VAT

NO OFFERS

Telephone (0642) 227716

(22894/VO)

VOLVO B10M Duple 340, 53 recliners, rear toilet, radio, video, curtains, E Reg, MoT Dec '91, ex com, **£62,000 plus VAT. Tel. (0862) 892085.** (22835/VO)

APRIL, 1983 Volvo B10M Plaxton 3500, 51 recliners plus courier, radio/PA and cassette, plug door, continental door, speed limiter, ZF gearbox, Telma, level raise, brown moquette, MoT April 1992. **£29,000. Tel. 0252 624404.** (22825/VO)

MIDI COACHES

1984 MERCEDES 608D, 21 seat midi-coach, brown interior, MoT March 1992, exceptional condition. **£8,250 ono. Tel. Chivers Coaches 0252 702201 (Surrey).** (22886/MC)

MINIBUSES

MERCEDES 307, C Reg, 12 seater, high roof, good condition, new clutch and flywheel ring gear, MoT 12/8/92, **£5,750 + VAT. P Bowran PMT (0782) 744744.** (22855/MB)

1989 G REG MERCEDES, 408D, 15 seats, high back, Bristol dome, roof racks. **£14,500 + VAT. Tel. 03552 27240.** (22900/MB)

MINIBUSES

WESTERN COMMERCIAL

NEW STOCK

811 TURBO MERCEDES. PMT AMI front, 33 seat, wide body, coachbuilt with power glider door, large boot, full width coach seats, high spec + standees. Stock.

709 MERCEDES. PMT. 25 full width coach seats, power door glider, large boot + standees. Stock.

709 MERCEDES ALEXANDER, 25 seats, bus spec, electric door, standees or dual pupose seats available, stock.

609 MERCEDES VAN CONVERSION, 24 seats, electric door, luxury.

308 MERCEDES, 12 seat, luxury.

USED

1990 MERCEDES 709 PMT AMI, 25 seat.

1989 MERCEDES 811 PMT AMI, 33 seat, luxury.

1987 MERCEDES 609, 26 seats.

1986 MERCEDES, 12 seater, high roof, luxury.

1986 MERCEDES, 21 Vogel seats.

1984 MERCEDES, 21 seater.

STAGE CARRIAGE DUAL PURPOSE

1988 709D MERCEDES ALEXANDER, 25 seats, electric door, + standees.

(17834/MB)

BRIDGE STREET, NEWBRIDGE, NR EDINBURGH
CONTACT JOHN LEITCH ON **031-333 2001**
OR EVENINGS 0357 21888
ALSO GORDON SHEARER ON 0466 792077 EVENINGS

1987 D FREIGHT ROVER

Sherpa LWB , 2.5 diesel, 20 + 2 standing, moquette seats, electric entrance doors, MoT June 1992, taxed.

£4,250 + VAT

Choice of 12, 16, 18, 20, 25 and 29 seaters available.

Tel: 061 273 3202 or 0850 318585 anytime

(22669/MB)

CONNAUGHT PSV

NEW VEHICLES AVAILABLE ON MERCEDES, RENAULT AND FORD ETC

1990 G REG FORD TRANSIT with new 16 seat conversion.

1989 F REG FORD TRANSIT, 16 seater Dormobile with power door.

1989 F REG FORD TRANSIT, 16 seater with power door and auto gearbox.

1985 C REG FREIGHT ROVER 350, 16 seater.

1985 B REG MERCEDES 608D, 21 seater, deep boot.

1984 B REG MERCEDES 307D, 12 seater.

Tel. Steve Peach

(0302) 770863
(0836) 551020

(22902/MB)

LEYLAND DAF

Turbo Diesel, reg September 1992, delivery miles only, luxury 16 seat midicoach, with TV and video.

£14,995 + VAT

Tel. 061 226 9090
061 456 9747

(22874/MB)

1987 IVECO Caetano Vianna, 24 seater, **£16,500 + VAT ono. Available immediately after Christmas. Tel. (0978) 841933.** (22849/MB)

MINIBUSES

GRAVELLS

THE WELSH MINIBUS CENTRE

Tel: Kidwelly 0554 890436 Fax: 0554 891338

IMMEDIATE DELIVERY

NEW RENAULT MASTER. 16 seater PSV luxury coach, diesel, finished in white. **NEW RENAULT TRAFIC.** 14 seater section 6, diesel, hi-roof, roof racks. **NEW RENAULT TRAFIC.** 14 seater, section 6, diesel, low roof.

USED

1989 (G) RENAULT MASTER. 16 seater PSV luxury coach, air door, low miles, new conversion.

1985 (C) TALBOT EXPRESS, 15 seater, PSV, finished in white, PSV August 1992.

Leasing facilities arranged.

(22877/MB)

M-2-M

NEW VEHICLES EX STOCK AT UNBEATABLE PRICES

12 SEAT	TALBOT EXPRESS	£10,000
16 SEAT	LEYLAND DAF 400 SERIES	£16,000
16 SEAT	FORD TRANSIT PURPOSE BUILT	£18,000
24 SEAT	MERCEDES BENZ 609D DROPWELL BOOT	£26,500
	STAR BUY THIS WEEK	
26 SEAT	MERCEDES BENZ 609D	£25,000

ALL PRICES INCLUDE CIF & 12 MONTHS ROAD TAX
FINANCE ARRANGED

Telephone: 061 494 6117

(22881/MB)

MERC 1987 507D

16-seater Executive minibus, black tinted windows, TV, video, PA, stereo, courier seat, telephone, spotlight, reading lamps, new MoT test, taxed.

£11,500 + VAT

Tel. 081-994 8969

(22771/MB)

2 X G89 FORD TRANSIT DIESEL

15 seater Minibus, side door, 40,000 miles, blue, PSV test, HP or lease.

£9,950 + VAT

Tel. Walton Motors Ltd

051 525 1873/9650

(22832/MB)

1986 16 SEAT FREIGHT ROVER SHERPA 350, Class 5 MoT, Ambulance tail lift, very good condition, 1 year's MoT, taxed. **£4,250 + VAT.**

Possible part exchange for 12 seat minibus. Cash difference either way.

Tel: 081 890 9942 days or 081 890 1356 eves

(22887/MB)

1984 FORD Transit Petrol, 12 seater, MoT Dec 1992, **£1,600 + VAT ono. Tel. (0703) 663700.** (22852/MB)

1988 FORD TRANSIT LWB, new shape, 15 seater, petrol, good condition, COF 1992. **£5,250 + VAT. Tel. 091 265 6747.**

(22876/MB)

UNCLASSIFIED

1988 Leyland Tiger 245 Service Bus, 55 seats, good condition, MoT Aug '92.
1988 Volvo B10M, 49/53 reclining seats, Plaxton body, TV, video, coffee machine, MoT March '92.
1990 Mercedes 811D coach, Scott body, 33 seat, power door, radio, PA, MoT 1 year.

Contact WHITELAWS COACHES (0698) 792800

(22885/UN)

UNCLASSIFIED

ALAN SILSON

(PSV) Limited
Jet House, Station Road, Ratby, Leicester LE6 0JN

The choice we had to make this week was to have a full page advert to enable us to detail all the super selection of "pre-owned" coaches, or to give you a small selection of what we have to offer! Well here goes...

1988 LAG Panoramic, 49 recliners, toilet, continental door, water boiler and including Sutrak air conditioning.
1988 VOLVO B10M Plaxton Paramount 3500, 49 recliners, toilet, drinks. A nice clean machine available to drive away now.
1987 DAF SB Duple 340, 57 seater. Choice of two, both have recent recon engines. Also have de-commissioned toilets to be supplied separately.
1986 (E) DAF MB230 Duple 340SLX, 51/53 recliners, demount toilet, drinks and wiring for video. Best offer will drive away today. Finance package available.
1986 VOLVO C10M, this machine has everything you need for an "up front" coach without costing a fortune. Do take the trouble to come and see. You will not be disappointed.
1986 VOLVO B10M Plaxton Paramount 3500, 53 recliners plus courier seat, double glazing. Choice of several in mint condition.
1986 NEOPLAN/PLAXTON 4000 Double Decker, 71 recliners, toilet, servery. How about if we put a new MoT on this machine and offer a complete repaint for £45,000!!! Interested now?
1986 MERCEDES 608D, 23 seater midi coach. We have repainted this lovely little coach and it has a new MoT. Best price will secure.
1985 VOLVO B10M Jonckheere Jubilee P599, 51 recliners and courier, double glazing, water boiler, drop driver, driver's sleeper, plus lots more. An excellent popular machine available from stock.
1985 LEYLAND TIGER 245 Duple Caribbean II, 51/53 recliners, sunken demountable rear o/s toilet, double glazing, cont. door, choice of several from one of England's premier coach operators.
1985 DAF MB230 Duple Caribbean II, 49 recliners, toilet plus lots more. This coach is very clean and ready to roll. Long MoT. Who will offer me 30k?? This is not a misprint either.
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1980 BEDFORD YLQ DUPLE DOMINANT II, 45 seats, power door, MoT March '92.

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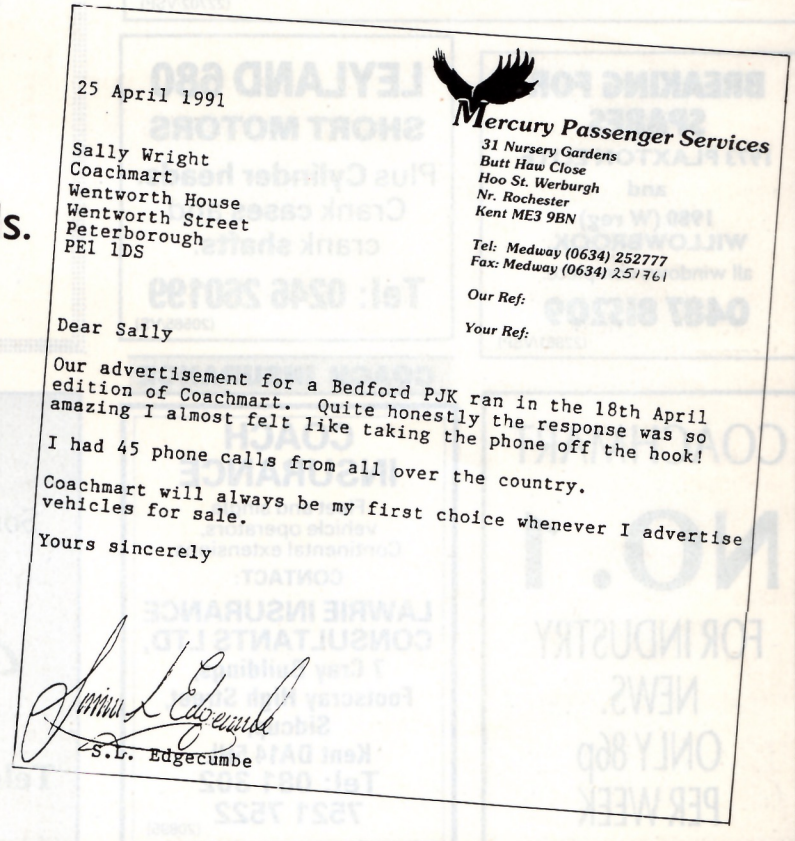

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